



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA

Università degli Studi di Padova

Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari

Corso di Laurea Magistrale in
Lingue Moderne per la Comunicazione e la Cooperazione Internazionale
Classe LM-38

Tesi di Laurea

*Liaison interpreting from theory to practice:
a project to help students develop their
interpreting skills*

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Anno Accademico 2022 / 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Interpreting, as stated by Sidiropoulou (2021: 135) is “the means of communicating meaning, intent, and so much more, instantaneously, or almost at the same time as speech is produced, from one language to another and across cultures”. This is a very interesting and meaningful definition because it summarises three of the most important elements, in my opinion, which make up interpreting: meaning, languages and cultures. What can be assumed from this statement is that interpreting aims at rendering messages from a source language (SL) to a target language (TL) focusing on its meaning more than on the translation of word for word and, in so doing, different cultures, and their knowledge are undoubtedly involved. In addition, the statement refers to the speaker’s intended meaning, namely the intention of the message, which has to be conveyed by the interpreter. The latter should pay attention to all those linguistic, cultural and non-verbal elements, mood, tone, gesture, posture, facial expressions and other pragmatic features, which characterise a communicative act and strongly influence its meaning (Cecco and Masiero, 2019). Therefore, what an interpreter needs to possess in order to be a professional are linguistic, cultural, communicative, pragmatic and social competences.

One of the modes of interpreting, together with consecutive interpreting (CI), simultaneous interpreting (SI) and chuchotage, is liaison interpreting, also known as dialogue interpreting (DI), which may also involve sight translation. This type of interpreting is also known as community interpreting, public service interpreting, or ad-hoc interpreting. As we will see in Chapter One, being an emerging type of interpreting, it is characterized by a complexity, both terminological and conceptual, which will be discussed in depth. In general, what can be said about liaison interpreting is that it is mainly a dialogical mode of interpreting (Dalziel, 2020) which covers a broad range of communication needs, situations, types of encounters and interpreting settings which go from medical, conflict areas to school, business, public services and legal settings (Sidiropoulou, 2021). Unlike conference interpreting, this is a non-conference type of interpreting (Merlini, 2015), in which the liaison interpreter works in a two way language direction and uses the first person. In this less-formal working setting (Oakes, 2014) a three way dialogue between the interpreter and the interlocutors takes place (Mack, 2005).

The people who the liaison interpreter deals with may be, for example, international business clients, or migrants who do not know the language of the host country and who need the help of the liaison interpreter to access public services. On the other side, we find, for example, representatives of local businesses, or service providers of various kinds. This type of interpreter should possess not only linguistic and communicative skills but also cultural knowledge and, since the working context may be characterised by sensitive topics, empathic and social competences (Dalziel, 2020).

As we will see in this dissertation, due to its working features and to the consideration of the role of the liaison interpreter and how it has changed over the years, “community interpreting in all its shapes and forms is about to redefine the scope of interpreting, the role of the interpreter, the educational pre-requisites for creating future interpreters, the requirements for professionalization and, by extension, for officially acknowledged and legally bound rights and responsibilities” (Sidiropoulou, 2021:136). Liaison interpreting is the general topic I decided to investigate in my dissertation, which aims at providing the reader with some theoretical information on interpreting and on one of the specific modes of interpreting, namely liaison interpreting, in order to give him/her an overview on this topic and on the competences a liaison interpreter should possess in order to become a professional. It will then move, as announced by the title of the thesis, to the practical part of the project which aims to give help to liaison interpreting students in their education by providing them with some practical material to work on. It will conclude with the analysis of a final questionnaire and the answers resulting from its completion in order to explore whether the materials proposed have been useful, on the basis of students’ personal opinions.

To be precise, four chapters have been written in this dissertation: the first one is characterised by a theoretical setting on interpreting; the second one which is focused on liaison interpreting and the skills of the liaison interpreter; the third one still is characterised by a theoretical setting but includes some practical references to the project; and finally a practical setting in the fourth chapter. Chapter 1 aims at investigating studies of scholars on the field of interpreting in general, focusing on the definitions they have given to it and on the classification of the different modes of interpreting, which presents

some challenges to researchers mainly due to a terminological complexity. Summarising the wide range of definitions given by scholars to interpreting, the latter will be defined as a complex process in which the interpreter plays the fundamental role of facilitator of the oral communication between different language speakers who come from different cultures, in an often stressful communicative context in which the comprehension of the message to interpret is influenced by external factors. The specific features of the types of interpreting will be analysed, together with an investigation of the skills possessed by an interpreter and their role as a professional. As concerns the different modes of interpreting we will see that they can be classified on the basis of the technique parameter or the setting parameter. The modes described will be: the simultaneous mode, which includes sight translation and chuchotage; the consecutive mode; the dialogic mode. While the first two modes of interpreting are mainly used in a conference setting, the third mode is mainly used in non-conference settings, like the community context. A deep analysis of this complex type of interpreting and its characteristics will be provided, stressing the differences with the SI mode. All the cited modes include the role of interpreter as central and among the skills he/she has to possess the following will emerge: linguistic, communicative, interpersonal, pragmatic, cultural, social skills, and other specific skills which will be described. Then, a comparison between the interpreter and the translator will be made in order to highlight similarities and differences.

Chapter 2 will focus on the role of the liaison interpreter, discussing his/her skills and the challenges he/she has to deal with during the performance in the different community working settings. In addition, the link between the interpreter and the mediator will be discussed, showing the complexity that characterizes it.

Moving toward the practical section of this dissertation, Chapter 3 aims at describing the basic language skills that an interpreter clearly needs in order to perform his/her work. The first skills that will be described are speaking and listening skills, followed by an analysis of reading and writing skills. Speaking skills will emerge as the main skills that an interpreter needs in order to perform his/her work, together with listening skills. Examples of exercises that students may do in order to develop these skills will be given, together with the description of the materials used by trainers to prepare the exercises. In

addition, reference to the specific tasks that interpreting students usually perform to develop these skills will be made, together with a description of the activity proposed in the project of this dissertation, highlighting how students can enhance their speaking and listening skills through the materials proposed to them. Challenges and difficulties interpreting students can face while working on these skills will be described too.

As for reading and writing skills, they will emerge as important skills for an interpreter to develop even though less essential for the interpreting performance. Examples of exercises that liaison interpreting students in general could do to strengthen and develop these skills will emerge together with reference to those performed by liaison interpreting students taking part in the present project. The importance of developing reading skills mainly in the preparatory phase of the interpreting training will be stressed, together with the difficulties students can face while performing reading tasks. Writing skills will emerge as skills mainly possessed by those interpreters who take notes during their performance, such as consecutive interpreters, and less essential for liaison interpreters. The chapter will conclude with a focus on the importance of developing the language skills of students in general but also of interpreting students in order to reach communicative competence, through an integrated approach. In this sense, considering the interpreting field, the existing link between the different language skills will be stressed together with the importance of teaching them in an integrated way.

Finally, Chapter 4 will show the different phases of the project in question, which consists in providing liaison interpreting students with materials that I prepared in collaboration with Fiona Dalziel and Serena Cecco in order to enhance students' skills. As we will see, the materials provided will be: video recordings of three different dialogues related to typical liaison interpreting situations such as medical, school and legal contexts; the glossaries, both in Italian and English, containing the specific terms of the dialogues; the scripts of the dialogues. The video recordings will be provided online so as to allow students to use them during their university careers whenever they want. There are three phases of the project: first, the preparatory phase which will consist in the research I conducted to create a corpus related to typical migrant questions which will be helpful for the creation of a terminology list using the terminology tool *fairterm*; the second step

will be that of preparing the glossaries with the specific terms contained in the dialogues, translating some parts of the dialogues from English to Italian and video recording them; the final part will consist in the analysis of the answers given by liaison interpreting students to the questionnaire proposed referring to the materials they used. The conclusions will discuss how useful these have been in providing students with materials to develop their liaison interpreting skills, on the basis of the answers to the questionnaire.

CHAPTER 1

INTERPRETING: AN OVERVIEW

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the studies of scholars and researchers in the field of interpreting, first through an analysis of the definitions that they have given of ‘interpreting’. It will show not only that they share some common ideas in defining the concept but it will propose some causes for reflection on interpreting. Secondly, there will be a focus on the different modes of interpreting, highlighting their specific features, with reference to the fact that classifying these represents a challenge for researchers, above all because of the terms used. Thirdly, skills and competences an interpreter should possess in order to become a professional in this area will be discussed, together with a comparison between the interpreter and the translator.

1.1 Defining Interpreting

A large number of definitions of interpreting have been proposed over the years (see for example Gentile (1996), Seleskovitch (1994), Riccardi (2003), Palazzi (2007) and many other). However, before focusing attention on the definitions of researchers and scholars, a first analysis of the verb ‘to interpret’ will be conducted, in order to try to understand what an interpreter has to deal with when performing and, as a consequence, what interpreting is. Starting from exploring the main monolingual dictionaries such as the Oxford Dictionary¹ (2022), Cambridge Dictionary² (2022), Collins Dictionary³ (2022), Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online⁴ (2022), Macmillan Dictionary⁵ (2022), Merriam Webster Dictionary⁶ (2022), the entries for the verb ‘to interpret’ can be compared giving rise to an interesting cause for reflection. To be precise, the first of the above cited dictionaries proposes these explanations: interpreting something means explaining the meaning of something; deciding that something has a particular meaning; translating one language into another as it is spoken (Oxford Dictionary, 2022).

¹ <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>

² <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

³ <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>

⁴ <https://www.ldoceonline.com/>

⁵ <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/>

⁶ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

The interesting point is that while the first two entries focus on the concept of meaning, the third one focuses on the concept of translation. Reading the third entry makes us think that interpreting means simply translating something, but many differences, together with similarities, exist between these two disciplines and a section will later be dedicated to this topic. The first two entries induce us to think that when an interpreter is performing, he/she focuses on the meaning of words, that is to say, on concepts, more than on simply translating words from one language into another. This topic too will be later analysed, proposing some definitions of interpreting given by scholars.

The second dictionary cited, the Cambridge (2022), proposes the following explanation: interpreting means deciding what the intended meaning of something is; describing the meaning of something; explaining; changing what someone is saying into the words of another language (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022); translating. As we saw before, this dictionary too focuses both on meaning and translation. In this case, the entries seem more detailed with respect to the previous ones. However, after having read the above entries, we can start thinking that the job of an interpreter concerns the meaning of words, with different languages speakers and with translation.

The third dictionary proposes similar explanations to the previous dictionaries but it is even more detailed: interpreting means conveying the meaning of something in performance; interpreting something in a particular way means that you decide that this is its meaning or significance; acting as an interpreter; translating orally (Collins Dictionary, 2022). The first two entries, while focusing again on meaning, add something new: the fact that a person decides to attribute a specific meaning to something gives rise to the idea that one interpreter could understand something differently from another interpreter, because of many external factors and pragmatics⁷ and also the fact that the interpreter might not grasp the intended meaning expressed by the source language speaker and as a consequence, convey an incorrect or partially incorrect message to the target language speaker. The last two entries refer to the performer, that is to say, to the

⁷ When we read or hear pieces of language, we normally try to understand not only what the words mean, but what the writer or speaker of those words intended to convey. The study of 'intended speaker meaning' is called pragmatics. (Yule, 1996: 127)

interpreter and to the oral dimension of his/her job. This means that oral communication is involved.

The Longman Dictionary (2022) proposes an entry similar to those given by the previous dictionaries, based on the concept of meaning and explanation of something. It proposes the following interesting entry: interpreting means translating spoken words from one language into another. The main points are that interpreting has to do with: the oral dimension; at least two languages (a source and a target one); the translation of the words (it has already been said that when translating the focus has to be on concepts, meaning, more than on words); the presence of at least two speakers (the clients of the interpreter). We could therefore assume, given all these features, that the interpreter works in an interactive environment, where two interlocutors who speak different languages can communicate thanks to the interpreter.

The Macmillan Dictionary (2022) gives us the following entry: interpreting means translating what someone is saying in one language into another language so that someone else can understand it. This entry is interesting because it seems to be a summary of what has been already said but it adds something new with respect to the previous entries: the fact that someone has to understand something. This highlights the important and central role of the interpreter in the interactive environment since he/she is the only one who can make the communication effective, conveying a message which is understandable for his/her client.

The last Dictionary, the Merriam Webster (2022), proposes, among many entries, the following one, which seems to be most suitable for the present exploration and discussion in the area of interpreting: interpreting means acting as an interpreter between speakers of different languages (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2022).

Given this introductory analysis of what dictionaries propose when looking for the meaning of the verb 'to interpret', it can be said that the activity of interpreting involves an interpreter who seems to be the central figure in charge of conveying an oral message (no reference to the written sphere has been made by any dictionary) between people who

speak different languages. The message conveyed has to be understandable for the target speaker and in order to be so the interpreter has to focus on the meaning which stands behind the words that, in turn, have to be translated. Nothing has been said about the place in which the activity should take place nor the time. In addition, even if no reference has been made up to now, it can be assumed that, as different languages are involved in the process, different cultures are too, as a consequence, involved. This implies for the interpreter possessing a deep knowledge not only of the languages but also the cultures, economies, societies, habits, laws, and pragmatic elements of the countries involved in the interpreting activity. Later on, a section will be dedicated to this topic, showing how an interpreter could be a mediator too.

These elements, that is to say, place and time together with pragmatic and cultural features, will be crucial when the analysis of the whole range of types of interpreting will be carried out. This means that interpreting will be described on the basis of: a specific place in which the interpreting activity is held and the consequential specific knowledge of the interpreter of that field of interest; a specific time in which the interpreting activity takes place; the knowledge of the interpreter of the different cultural background of his/her clients and the consequent status of the participants. When the different types of interpreting are explored, this theme will be analysed in greater depth since many other factors are involved in the classification of interpreting.

At this point the definitions of interpreting given by scholars and researchers can be explored. According to Riccardi (2003: 85), a simultaneous interpreting teacher at the department of Language and Translation studies of Trieste, interpreting, intended as oral interlinguistic mediation or translation of oral communication can be defined as “un servizio prestato da un interprete a parlanti di lingue diverse allo scopo di stabilire la comunicazione fra loro in un dato luogo e istante”⁸. Analysing the above statement given by Riccardi (2003), a reference to the previously discussed place and time has been made, in addition to the fact that the role of the interpreter emerges as a service provider who works in an oral communicative context in which people who speak different languages

⁸ A service provided by an interpreter to speakers of different languages in order to make them communicate in a specific place and time.

want to interact. Since the oral dimension is stressed in the definition given by Riccardi (2003), it can be said that orality is the dimension that characterises interpreting, highlighting the difference between this and the other form of mediated interlinguistic communication, that is to say, translation. Then, something new is mentioned, which is the ‘service’ that the interpreter provides. Exploring the online Treccani dictionary⁹, among the huge number of entries available for the term ‘servizio’, one seems the most interesting: we talk about a service when we refer to a job done for someone upon payment. It has to be said that interpreters work for many different types of clients and in many different and specific sectors. Indeed we can talk about different types of interpreting. The payment topic is a highly debated one since, as we will see later, on the basis of the type of client an interpreter works for and the type of area in which he/she performs, he/she is considered a more or less prestigious and professional interpreter and, as a consequence, he/she receives a certain salary. To give one example, a conference interpreter who works at international meetings for politicians from all over the world is better considered and paid with respect to a liaison interpreter who works for migrants or refugees, that is to say, minorities (Mikkelsen, 1999).

The following definition focuses on another aspect of interpreting, which is seen as a dynamic and complex process in which “(T)he interpreter has first to listen to the speaker, understand and analyse what is being said, and then resynthesize the speech in the appropriate form in a different language ...” (Jones, 1996: 6). According to Riccardi (2003), the process requires great effort and attention on the part of the interpreter to grasp the necessary information in order to understand the message of the speaker. First, the message is issued by the speaker (so the listener has to listen to it) and second it is received by the listener (who has to analyse and understand it). These are the two main moments that characterise the so called communicative act (Riccardi, 2003). When the interpreter perceives the message, the comprehension phase starts, followed by the reconstruction of the meaning by the interpreter. This means that the reception of the message implies a continuous creation of the intended meaning. So, if interpretation represents the fundamental element of comprehension, what does comprehending mean? Comprehending means understanding the communicative intention of the speaker

⁹ <https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/servizio/>

(Riccardi, 2003). As already stated, different interpreters could perceive and understand the same message differently because, when they give a meaning to what they hear, they have to select, organize and interpret those acoustic data and each one does it differently since variables like the context, his/her expectations, his/her knowledge, his/her attitude affect the way in which a person decodes a message (Riccardi, 2003).

Facilitating the communication between different language speakers is of utmost importance when talking about interpreting. The communication is defined as an inference process in which the speaker produces some linguistic signs so as to make the interlocutor reach some conclusions. This inference process is what we call interpreting (Riccardi, 2003), whose aim is to comprehend, understand, deduce something. It can be said now that in the oral interlinguistic interpretation the role of the interpreter is that of deducing what the source language speaker intended to be deduced by emitting some linguistic signs, comprehending the message and reproducing it in the target language. Thanks to this process mediated by the interpreter, the two interlocutors can communicate, in the sense explained above. The message interpreted by the interpreter has to reproduce the form and the meaning of the original message as much as possible. Again on the topic of meaning, an interpreter and her theory can be cited: Seleskovitch and the interpretive theory also known as “*teorie du sense*”. In her theory, interpreting is a very demanding activity not simply focused on translating words or substituting words from one language into another. It is a matter of grasping the meaning of words, the non verbal sense of the message, and finding then the best equivalent in order to render the message in the target language. According to Seleskovitch (1989) interpreting “is not the oral translation of words, it uncovers a meaning and makes it explicit for others”.

The following definition stresses the communicative aspect of the interpreting activity, which is, as already stated, a complex process aimed at facilitating the communication between two different languages speakers. To be precise, “*Il compito dell’interprete è quello di facilitare la comunicazione, e quindi lo stesso dovrà essere consapevole di partecipare ad un atto comunicativo in cui non è il destinatario, ma dove il suo ruolo [...] gli deve consentire di far sì che il TA (testo d’arrivo) abbia la stessa funzione informativa e lo stesso valore socioculturale del TP (testo di partenza), nella consapevolezza che è*

chiamato ad esprimere non solo competenze linguistiche ma anche comunicative”¹⁰(Palazzi, 2007: 263). It is clear that, as stated above, in the communicative act the interpreter is not the final recipient of the message issued by the source language speaker but he/she has to understand the intended meaning of that message through the inference process, reformulate it in the target language and convey it to the final recipient, that is to say, the target language interlocutor. In order to reproduce the same informative function and the same sociocultural value of the source message, the interpreter has not only to put into practice his/her bilingual knowledge but also his/her extralinguistic knowledge and communicative competence. This implies that the interpreter has not only to possess a deep knowledge of the linguistic aspects of both source and target interlocutor’s countries of origin but also the cultural and social aspects. The latter could probably be different between the source and target country and could imply an effort on the part of the interpreter when performing in order to convey a message which does not appear inappropriate for the target culture. Communicative competence (Riccardi, 2003) refers to the ability of the interpreter to understand the intended meaning of the issued message, elaborate and re-transmit it to the final recipient, putting into practice all his/her above cited skills: linguistic and extralinguistic, taking into account cultural and social aspects of communication.

The following definitions focus on the oral dimension which is, as we have seen, crucial for interpreting and makes this form of interlinguistic communication different from but inevitably linked to the other one, that is to say, translation. Interpreting intended as oral translation is “the live and immediate conveyance of oral messages across languages” (Lee & Buzo, 2009: 3). This definition stresses the fact that the message is conveyed immediately and live, that is to say that it is not recorded and conveyed later but as soon as the source language speaker issues the message, the interpreting process starts, without postponing it. In fact, according to Kade (1968), interpreting is a form of oral translation in which the source text is presented once and the target text is produced under time pressure, and cannot be revised. No opportunity to consult references previously nor

¹⁰ An interpreter has to facilitate the communication, being aware of taking part in a communicative act in which he/she is not the recipient but the one who makes the target text have the same informative function and the same sociocultural value as the source text, knowing that he/she has to use not only linguistic but also communicative competences.

correcting or editing the final product exists for the interpreter. Here the concept of immediacy is explained by saying that the interpreter, in contrast to a translator, has no time to reflect about how the final product (the reformulated message in the target language) will be. As a consequence, he/she has to take decisions rapidly, under time pressure and because of this, he/she has to be able to cope with the stress caused by the lack of time, using the best strategy. The management of stress is one of the skills an interpreter should possess to become a professional and particular techniques exist in order to enhance this skill (Cecco and Masiero, 2019).

Weber (1984) points out that interpreting is “the oral transposition of an orally delivered message at conference or a meeting from a source language into a target language performed in the presence of the participants”. Here, a reference is made to the context, which is, in general, a conference or a meeting and to the presence of participants. The latter include primary participants such as interlocutors and the public and secondary ones, such as the interpreter. Practitioners and scholars alike seem to agree that interpreting occurs “whenever a message originating orally in one language is reformulated and retransmitted orally in a second language”, to quote Anderson (1978: 218). This definition resumes what has been already said, with a reference to the typical oral sphere, the involvement of source and target languages, the reformulation and retransmission of the message by the interpreter.

To sum up, different writers have defined interpreting in different ways. It has been defined as communication (Seleskovitch, 1994), interaction (Wadensjo, 1998), pragmatics (Lecerle, 1999), discoursed process (Roy, 2000), oral transfer of messages between different languages speakers (Gentile, 1996), with the role of interpreter as spokesman. After having explored the main monolingual dictionaries in order to understand what interpreting is and after having discussed some definitions of scholars, it can be said that interpreting is oral communication; different languages and cultures are involved; it is an activity of interaction between the clients and the interpreter; it is a matter of meaning; it is dynamic; the process is immediate. In the following section, the different modes of interpreting will be analysed.

1.2 Modes of interpreting

The following section presents the main techniques or modes of interpreting which are: simultaneous interpreting (SI), consecutive interpreting (CI), chuchotage, sight translation and dialogue interpreting (DI). These are the techniques that can be used in different settings or contexts. To give an example, the same technique can be used both in a conference setting and in a legal setting. When we consider the context, we can classify different types of interpreting like: community, legal, health, education and conference interpreting. Therefore, when a classification of modes of interpreting is made the parameter used to make that classification has to be highlighted: it can be the technique parameter or the setting parameter. If some confusion related to the above considerations seems to arise it can be said that it is only a matter of terms and of the right term to use in the right circumstance. To make an example, if a reference is made to conference interpreting it means that the focus is the conference setting; as far as the technique used in this specific setting, it could be the consecutive or more probably the simultaneous one. Another example refers to community interpreting: if this term is used it means that a specific technique (and we will see that the technique used is usually DI or CI) is applied by the interpreter when performing in a community or public setting (an analysis of this topic will follow).

After this brief introductory part, the first mode of interpreting described here is simultaneous interpreting (SI). Historically, it was practiced for the first time in the mid twentieth century, at the Nuremberg Trials (1945-1946) which took place after World War II. The need for interpreters during these trials was due to the presence of politicians and leaders from different countries who needed to communicate and understand each other over geopolitical matters (Gile, 2006). As suggested by the term, in SI the interpreter provides the target-language message at the same time as the source-language message is produced (Mikkelsen, 1999). As a consequence, no time for memorization or taking note exists or is needed. To be precise, to quote Seleskovitch (1978):

“In simultaneous interpretation the interpreter is isolated in a booth. He speaks at the same time as the speaker and therefore has no need to memorize or jot down what is said. Moreover, the processes of analysis-comprehension and of reconstruction-expression are

telescoped. The interpreter works on the message bit by bit, giving the portion he has understood while analyzing and assimilating the next idea”.

We can see an interesting verb used by Seleskovitch (1978) in order to explain the processes involved in SI. The verb used is “telescoped”. Looking for the meaning in the online dictionary Collins¹¹, the figurative use of this verb refers to compression. Indeed, if we think that the simultaneous interpreter renders the target language message at the same time as the source one is emitted, what takes place in SI is a real compression of the processes cited above. This is due to the non-existence of time for the interpreter to analyse the original message, understand the content or meaning of it, reconstruct the message and express it in the target language, making it comprehensible for the target audience. What happens in the interpreter’s brain is something that seems almost impossible for people who have nothing to do with interpreting.

As explained by Seleskovitch (1978), the interpreter works on small portions of message as if they were bits, managing to render the bit he/she has understood and at the same time analyse and understand the following bit and so on, reproducing this process bit by bit, until the end of the sentence. The complexity of this task has led researches to investigate mainly the area of the working memory, the models of the cognitive process, the neural correlates and the strategies used by interpreters to cope with cognitive and linguistics challenges (Diriker, 2015). Studies on memory have demonstrated that what is crucial in the interpreting process is not a superior working memory capacity per se but the ability to manage a high quantity of information to be processed with limited cognitive resources (Diriker, 2015).

¹¹ <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/it/dizionario/inglese/telescope>

There are strategies that an interpreter can use in order to make this management possible. For example, anticipation¹², omission¹³, adding¹⁴ and explicitation¹⁵. When the SI interpreter performs, as Diriker (2015) points out, he/she sits in a sound proof booth that prevents the acoustic overlap and need special equipment, that is to say, he/she listens to the speaker via a headset and talks into a microphone. In a conference, for instance, delegates listen to the target-language message through a headset. This mode of interpreting can also be used when interpreting between two signed languages¹⁶. In this case the interpreter does not sit in a booth, but he/she stands in the conference room so he/she can see the speaker and can be seen by other participants (the visual contact is crucial when deaf speakers or listeners are involved). When the interpreter works without a booth and with a few listeners we can talk about whispered interpreting or chuchotage (a section will be dedicated to this topic). The SI mode also includes: sight translation/interpreting when a written text is delivered orally in real time; simultaneous with text when the interpreter processes the speaker's speech following the written text of that speech simultaneously; simultaneous consecutive when the interpreter works consecutively and records the original speech and then interprets the recorded speech simultaneously without need of taking notes (Diriker, 2015).

The second mode described here is consecutive interpreting (CI). As pointed out by Andres (2015), this label was used for the first time after the 1920s in order to distinguish the classic and traditional mode of interpreting from the new mode of interpreting, that is to say, SI, which gradually displaced CI (the Nuremberg trials were the starting point of this change). CI is known as the traditional mode of interpreting because it seems to be

¹² Anticipation is a form of strategic prediction since it refers to the prediction of elements of the source speech which are not yet available for the interpreter (Liontou, 2015).

¹³ Omission is one of the strategies used by interpreters to cope with the demands of the interpreting process. Different types of omission exists but in its broader sense, omission refers to a lack of translational correspondence between the source and the target text (Napier, 2015).

¹⁴ Addition is considered, together with omission, not only a strategy as stated before but also an error that an interpreter can make during his/her performance (Falbo, 2015). While omission can cause a loss of meaning, addition refers to an introduction of new meaning to what has been said (Falbo, 2015). An addition could change the original meaning of the message, producing, as a consequence, misunderstanding.

¹⁵ Explicitation consists in explicating in the target speech something implicit of the source speech. This can be made by inserting additional elements, for example in the lexical and syntactic field (Gumul, 2015).

¹⁶ Signed language interpreting SLI refers to the interpreting between two signed languages or between a signed language and a spoken one. It is mainly performed through the simultaneous mode since there is not the acoustic overlap of two different languages. SL interpreters use hands to interpret so they cannot take notes while performing (Napier and Leeson, 2015).

an old practice which dates back to Ancient Egypt when leaders, conquerors, traders and explorers were helped to communicate with each other by a person that probably spoke after someone had spoken another language (Gile, 2006). The person mentioned refers to the interpreter; the fact that he/she speaks after someone had spoken into another language means that he/she listens to that person for some time before speaking to another person who speaks a different language.

Therefore what happens in CI, differently from SI, is that the interpreter listens to the speaker until the end of the source language speech and when he/she stops he/she starts producing the target language message. This alternation of turn taking goes on until the end of the utterance. Technically, the interpreter is in the room with the clients so he/she speaks face to face with them and has enough time to understand the meaning of the message, analyse it and memorize (Mikkelsen, 1999). One of the main characteristics of this mode of interpreting is that the interpreter usually takes notes¹⁷ while listening to the parties. Defining it in a broader sense, CI is the rendering of a source language utterance lasting from few seconds to some minutes into a target language (Andres, 2015). This means that the interpreter, while listening to the original speaker for a time which goes from seconds to minutes, has to understand and memorize the message (with or without taking notes) and subsequently re-elaborate it and transmit to the target speaker, who is waiting for its speaking turn.

As far as the setting or communicative situation or communicative event (Bendazzoli, 2010) is concerned, the consecutive mode, together with the simultaneous one, are the two main modes used during conferences. Conference interpreters are therefore the interpreters who work in conference contexts using different techniques or modes, such as the consecutive or the simultaneous one. At the start of the 20th century and to be

¹⁷ The process of taking notes is seen as an aid to the interpreter's memory since sometimes he/she has to render speeches that last up to 10 minutes. Therefore, especially in the phase of comprehension, which is the initial phase of the processing, the interpreter takes notes in order to avoid overburden his/her memory and ensure the retrieval of information stored in the memory during the phase of production, the second one. Taking notes does not replace memory; it is seen in fact as a 'parallel stored strategy' because the interpreter stores information in two different and interdependent ways: while listening and taking notes, the interpreter continues to analyse the speech in order to remember and understand the main content which will be transmitted to the target listener. This technique is used above all when there are a lot of names and numbers (Ahrens, 2015).

precise at the end of World War I, when the League of Nations held conferences and multilateral meetings, conference interpreting took place, and the consecutive mode was the technique used. Then, in the mid 20th century, with the Nuremberg trials after World War II, the predominant mode of conference interpreting became the simultaneous one, which has remained the main technique for conference interpreting up to now (Diriker, 2015). Conference interpreting is a type of interpreting classified on the basis of the setting in which the interpreting phase takes place, whatever technique is used (simultaneous or consecutive). Conference interpreting is the most professionalised sector, the most salient and prestigious thanks to its high-profile setting (Diriker, 2015). The typical settings of conference interpreting are: multilateral meetings and international conferences, press conferences, parliamentary conferences, international tribunals, university lecturers hall, workshops, official dinners religious services, institutions such as UN and EU (Diriker, 2015). As stated by the International Association of Conference Interpreters AIIC, it can be defined as the rendering of utterances in one language in another at formal and informal conferences, in simultaneous or consecutive mode but prevalently in SI mode (often used as a synonym for conference interpreting as stated by Diriker, 2015).

Another mode of interpreting is the one known by the French term “chuchotage” or whispered interpreting. This is a simultaneous interpreting technique in which the interpreter does not sit in a booth and does not use microphone nor a headset but simply whispers the target language message in the listener’s ears, sitting next to or behind him/her, for example, in the conference room or meeting (Gile, 2006). This technique can also be used with a few people or a very small group of listeners. Defining whispered interpreting it can be said that "one participant speaks and simultaneously an interpreter whispers into the ear of the one or maximum two people who require interpreting services" (Jones, 1998 quoted in Mikkelsen 2015). Chuchotage is one of the modes of interpreting used in conference settings, meetings and legal settings. The latter one refers to courtrooms or lawyer’s offices where activities related to the law are conducted. Remaining in the field of simultaneous interpreting, the fourth technique of interpreting described here is sight translation. The term sight translation, known as “traducción a la vista” in Spanish, “traduction à vue” in French and “traduzione a vista” in Italian, is used

when the input for the interpreter is written. Written input does not refer only to a printed text but it could be a power point presentation, slides, transparencies, a subtitle of a film and other materials (Bendazzoli, 2010). Focusing on the terminology, when the input is read by a speaker to the interpreter the term to be used is sight interpretation; on the contrary, when no speakers read the text and the interpreter has therefore to interpret orally something that he/she can only see but not hear, the best term to be used is sight translation. To be precise, these two techniques can be described in this way:

“The difference between these two [techniques] is that during sight translation, the [interpreter] is able to render a translation of a given text at his or her own pace (internally controlled), whereas during sight interpretation, although [interpreters] may have been given some time to prepare the text prior to the interpretation task, they are nonetheless expected to translate according to the pace of the speaker (externally controlled) and pay more attention to the input, meaning that what the [interpreters] hear and what the [interpreters] see on paper may not coincide” (Ilg & Lambert 1996, p. 77 quoted in Bendazzoli, 2010).

It is clear that, in any case, a written text has to be rendered orally in another language in real time so the sight translation/interpreting technique could be considered a hybrid form of interpreting since it includes both written and oral spheres. Given the above definition, we can easily understand that one of the advantages of sight translation is that the interpreter can easily control his/her pace when rendering the message; on the contrary, in sight interpreting the interpreter is constantly reading the text and listening to the speaker so he/she has to cope with an additional cognitive demand, increasing the risk of lexical and syntactic interference. In addition, he/she has to interpret on the basis of the speaker pace.

Sight interpreting/translation can be used in a wide range of settings such as the legal one (in court interpreting it can be used to render witness statements) in addition to meetings of a bilateral nature in which a written document (an annual report for example) is delivered orally in sight interpreting mode. Sight interpreting is also used in conference settings such as press conferences where press reports, letters of apology or congratulations are sight interpreted. In community-based institutional settings sight translation may be used to render orally a written record of a previously interpreted interview in police or asylum setting; in healthcare interpreting it is used to render medical reports (Cenkova, 2015). Sight interpreting is also sometimes used in aptitude testing in

order to check if students can get the essential meaning of the text. It is considered a good exercise for speed and preparing for simultaneous interpreting (Cenkova, 2015).

As for the last mode of interpreting described here, that is to say, dialogue interpreting, some terminological confusion exists. The reason is that dialogue interpreting is often considered a synonym of community interpreting, ad hoc interpreting, liaison interpreting and public service interpreting. Different scholars have different opinions about this topic and different countries use different synonyms but technically, when we talk about dialogue interpreting we refer to a mode or technique mainly used in the community interpreting setting (Merlini, 2015). Therefore, as explained in the introductory section, it seems that a difference exists between the technique (dialogic) and the setting (community) in which the technique is used. Among the main characteristics of dialogue interpreting as a technique it has to be remembered its interactive and dynamic nature, characterised by a three-way dialogue with the interpreter as intermediary. The latter is allowed to translate the message, usually short chunks, during the pause that follows the speaker speech. The dialogue interpreter knows and speaks two languages since he/she has to translate orally the information that goes in one direction (in this case the message is uttered in the first language) and then in another (the message is uttered in the second language). The communication that takes place is characterised by an alternation of turn taking in which the participants communicate face to face, sitting around a table. In such a communicative context the function of the interpreter is that of managing the communication by entering smoothly and not interrupting, trying to enable the interlocutors to understand without misunderstanding their messages and intentions. In so doing, the interpreter, who does not take notes since the utterances are short and can be remembered before being produced in the target language, has the fundamental function of creating and maintaining a relaxed and trusting atmosphere (Dalziel, 2020).

Some definitions has been given by different scholars about dialogue interpreting. In general, as stated by Merlini (2015), when a distinction between technique and setting is not made, it can be said that DI covers a broad range of non-conference interpreting activities that take place in different settings linked to the community. In addition, according to Mason (1999) DI is an “interpreter-mediated communication in spontaneous

face-to-face interaction”. This definition includes a reference to the fact that when interpreting in the dialogic mode, the interpreter has the role of the mediator in a communicative situation that takes place between two interlocutors who do not speak the same language (as previously stated) nor come from the same culture. The interpreter therefore represents the third party of the so called ‘triadic exchange’ as stated by Mason and Stewart (2001): three people communicate face to face in a spontaneous way, interacting each other in a mediated context.

The following pattern summarises the triadic exchange typical of courtroom interpreting and immigration interviews (Mason and Stewart, 2001: 54): speaker (1° interlocutor) -> mediator (intermediary) -> target (2° interlocutor). As we can see, the mediator/intermediary, who stands between the two interlocutors, is the interpreter who, especially in this mode of interpreting, may play the fundamental role not only of translator but also of mediator. This means that he/she has to work in a context in which at least two different cultural backgrounds are involved and consequently two different ways of behaving, which may have to be interpreted and explained in a mediated way to the interlocutors. The fact that the latter come from different cultural backgrounds makes the interpreter perform in an unbalanced of power context, where he/she has to mediate between, for example, the public service provider who possesses a higher status and the refugee or immigrant, who possesses a lower status, does not share a common language with the service provider and actually needs the interpreter to help him/her in successfully communicating with his/her interlocutor. At this point it can be assumed that the dialogue interpreter, who works in a community context, represents an essential element for a migrant who does not know anyone and has just arrived in a new country. In this regard, a focus on the role of the interpreter in general and in specific in the context of liaison/community interpreting will be made later, including the skills he/she has to possess and the challenges he/she has to deal with.

After having described the main modes of interpreting, some reflections on the differences between the DI mode and the SI one (or conference interpreting in general if we consider the setting) can be made. SI mode, as we have seen, is the typical mode used in conference interpreting: the conference context is considered a prestigious one, where

people who come from all over the world and belong to a similar background level need to communicate. This means that their power relation is balanced, the register used is formal and the interpreter works in one language direction. On the contrary, when talking about DI a different communicative context is often involved: a minority language speaker who needs to communicate with a service provider in the host country is helped by an interpreter who, in this case, has to communicate in two language directions but above all has to balance the unbalanced context, from the cultural, linguistic and power point of view. A study conducted by Maximous (2017), which examines how community interpreting is taught and learned at the University of Sydney, in the 2013 academic year, seems interesting. Data collected showed how students found DI: they perceive it as the easiest mode of interpreting, maybe because of its dialogic nature, short utterances to memorize and informal language. However as we have seen, the role of the dialogue interpreter, also defined mediator, is complex and the complexity of this technique, as stated by Maximous (2017), is due to the fact the interpreter has to mediate between two parties whose power is different so he/she works in a situation of imbalance of power, in which he/she has to mediate between two different cultures, backgrounds and registers. Therefore, many skills, knowledge and competencies are required to become a dialogue interpreter even though students may not be aware of the complexity of the community interpreting task.

At this point a focus on the context in which the dialogue interpreter works would be appropriate. It has already been said that the communicative situation in which the dialogue technique is most used is the community setting. This refers to legal, social, public service and healthcare settings. To be precise, diverse situations are contemplated by this dialogic category: medical consultations, tv talk shows, business and diplomatic encounters, courtroom trials, police interviews, parent-teacher meetings, immigration hearings (Merlini, 2015). Therefore, it can be easily assumed that the dialogue interpreter who works in such a context is used to deal with low register, informal language and familiarity of topics. Trying to give a definition of community interpreting it can be said that, in Maximous (2017) words:

“Community interpreting, in particular and as opposed to conference interpreting, is described and defined as “liaison interpreting” and “dialogue interpreting” (Ozolins, 1995, p. 153; Wadensjö, 1993, p. 105) and

characterised by the interpreter performing in at least two languages to facilitate communication between at least two parties during a conversation where the interpreter is, most of time, physically present”.

Therefore, again we can see that DI is, most of the time, the main mode of interpreting used in community settings and that the two topics are closely linked because of their nature. Up to now, the main characteristics of community interpreting are that: it enables clients and professionals to communicate in a wide range of settings which go from the business one to the social one; the communication takes place in small groups of people (usually 3); it is mostly DI but also chuchotage or CI especially in court context and interviews situations; the liaison interpreter, who plays a crucial role of mediator, is traditionally an untrained ad hoc interpreter, unpaid and volunteer.

However, since a widespread use of synonyms to refer to community interpreting exists, a terminological confusion obviously arises. A solution to the controversy over its name can be found in Mack (2005). He makes an interesting reference to the words of Gentile (1997), who states that:

“There is no point in having definitions which do not function as discriminants between categories. There is no point in having a label such as community interpreting because it marks features which are not exclusively to it. In Australia we do not use the term community interpreting but simply interpreting, just as we do not use the term salted butter because all our butter is salted” (Gentile, 1997 quoted in Mack, 2005).

Reflecting on these words, what seems clear is that sometimes it does not make any sense using labels to categorize everything because often boundaries are not so defined. The Australian example is crucial: they use the more generic term interpreting even when they refer to the community context since some features of community interpreting are those features of interpreting in general and it would does not make any sense for people to classify those characteristics in a well-defined category. Therefore, if we think about community interpreting following this path, the terminological dilemma seems to be solved.

To conclude, it has to be said that the field of community interpreting is growing in importance from the professional and educational point of view; however, with respect to conference interpreting, there seems to be a lack of studies on teaching and learning

community interpreting (Maximous, 2017), the most common type of interpreting in the world (Hale, 2015). As claimed in the introduction to this chapter, the following section focuses on the skills and competences of the interpreter, whose role will be compared to that of the translator.

1.3 The role of the interpreter

What emerges from the previous sections is the crucial role played by the interpreter during the interpreting activity, whatever type of technique used and setting involved. We have seen that the interpreter has to possess linguistic knowledge in order to transfer the message from the source speaker to the target one and that he/she has to possess cultural knowledge too in order to mediate between the two interlocutors and allow successful communication. In the following section an overview of the skills and competences an interpreter in general should have will be provided, regardless of where and for whom they interpret. Later, a focus on culture and pragmatics as two variables linked to the interpreting performance will be presented. Finally, a section on the comparison between interpreting and translation will be presented, highlighting similarities and differences between the two disciplines in order to understand if the roles of the respective performers converge.

1.3.1 Skills and competencies of the interpreter

As we have seen previously, the activity of interpreting has been defined over the years in different ways by different scholars. Its characteristics have been also examined, together with the modes of interpreting and their features. Since the central element of interpreting is occupied by the interpreter, it is interesting to explore his/her role. As reported by Cecco and Masiero (2019: 48), interpreters are “expected to render a professional service, based on skills and competences they have acquired during the training. [. . .] in such a way that participants in a multilingual event who do not speak or understand each other’s language may nevertheless communicate successfully”. We can see that reference is made to the multilingual setting in which they perform their activity and to the aim of it, which is facilitating the communication between the interlocutors in an understandable way. The interesting point is that the author stresses the fact that the interpreter bases

his/her service on skills and competences. However, in this definition no reference is made to what these skills and competences are in detail.

In the following definition too the communication skills and linguistic knowledge are highlighted as important for professional interpreters¹⁸. To be precise, Lee and Buzo (2009: 3) argue that “professional interpreting requires far more than just bilingual communication competence, for in addition to linguistic abilities, competent interpreters must possess strong interpreting skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills and professional ethics”¹⁹. As we can see, this definition stresses the competence element and describes how the competent interpreter has to be in order to be considered a professional. With respect to the previous definition, the authors add ethics and interpersonal²⁰ skills.

Again, Palazzi (2007: 263) describes in the following definition what the role of the interpreter is: “Il compito dell’interprete è quello di facilitare la comunicazione, e quindi lo stesso dovrà essere consapevole di partecipare ad un atto comunicativo in cui non è il destinatario, ma dove il suo ruolo [...] gli deve consentire di far sì che il TA (testo d’arrivo) abbia la stessa funzione informativa e lo stesso valore socioculturale del TP (testo di partenza), nella consapevolezza che è chiamato ad esprimere non solo competenze linguistiche ma anche comunicative”²¹. As previously stated, the linguistic and communicative competences emerge here as the main competences required by a professional interpreter in order to allow the communication. The communication topic has been recently studied and what emerged was the importance of the non-verbal aspects

¹⁸ A professional interpreter is an interpreter who exercises his/her occupation on the basis of skills, competence, education and training, enjoying a certain status in the society.

¹⁹ Professional ethics, in this case, is intended as a set of rules and norms which regulates the exercise of a particular occupation. As stated by Setton (2015) who reports the thoughts of Bancroft (2005), there are 5 ethical principles for interpreters: integrity, confidentiality, neutrality, fidelity and competence.

²⁰ The interpersonal skills are those skills that allow a person to settle a relation with another person, considering his/her own values and those of the other person and respecting them. In this way, the relation can be based on collaboration, cooperation, management of conflicts, keeping and improving the existing relation. In the interpreting area, the interpreter therefore can perform his/her activity as a professional thanks to this skills, establishing a satisfactory communication with his/her interlocutors.

²¹ An interpreter has to facilitate the communication, being aware of taking part in a communicative act in which he/she is not the recipient but the one who makes the target text have the same informative function and the same sociocultural value as the source text, knowing that he/she has to use not only linguistic but also communicative competences.

of communication, since both verbal and non-verbal elements characterise the message to be interpreted.

The ability to manage and interpret non-verbal elements makes the difference between a good and an excellent interpreter. These elements, also known as paralinguistic elements, are: tone of voice, intonation, pauses, body posture and gesture, facial expression (Cecco and Masiero, 2019). Possessing these paralinguistic skills is important for easier and smooth communication between the interpreter and the client and to avoid misunderstandings, especially when interpreters do not understand exactly what the speaker is implying or whether they are making a joke or what their attitude is. At the same time, interpreters can use non-verbal communication to express meanings more forcefully or concisely (Ko, 2008). It has to be said that in general the non-verbal aspects of communication are important along with the verbal ones for interpreters, but when they have to deal with face to face interactions, typical of the dialogic mode of interpreting used in community settings, non-verbal elements take on greater importance.

To sum up, what appears to be the necessary and required skills that a professional interpreter has to possess are: linguistic skills (at least two languages are involved but even more), communicative skills (since interpreters has to facilitate the communication between the interlocutors), interpersonal skills (which allow him/her to establish a successful relation with the interlocutors), professional ethics and finally cultural skills. As stated by Jones (1996) “in all of their work, (conference) interpreters must bridge the cultural and conceptual gaps separating the participants in a meeting.”

However, these skills are only some of those required to be an interpreter. Kalina (2003) in fact adds to the traditional linguistic and communicative skills, the knowledge of political, social, ethnic, administrative structures, community life, literature and arts of the countries involved in the communicative act. A good memory and the ability to manage stressful situations in which it is impossible to anticipate everything are required too. Then, since no spare time to reflect exists but everything is constantly evolving, the interpreter should be able to cope with time pressure and to take quick decisions: this also includes the ability to decide which is the best strategy to apply if a problem has to be

solved. According to Pokorn and Mikolic (2020), the ability of the interpreter to apply the best strategy and coping tactic is one of the skills that belong to the specific interpreting competence. To be precise, the author examines the global, comprehension, production and emergency strategies for the SI mode and proposes exercises to learn and improve them. Linked to communication skills, the ability to speak in public is essential for a professional interpreter, in addition to the ability to listen and speak at the same time, in the case of SI.

For the purpose of this section, consulting the SCIC training videos²² section about skills acquisition, available at the European Commission website, was relevant. An interview has been conducted by Barbara Jawitz with Louisiana Busutil in order to compare the activity of learning photography with that of learning interpreting. What emerges is that the skills that an interpreter (mainly in the SI and CI mode) has to possess are: active listening²³, concentration ability and analysis, taking-note, public speaking ability²⁴, reformulating, stress management, strategies of anticipation, explanation and synthesis, mastery of the mother tongue, curiosity and keep calm.

1.3.2 The interpreter competence

We can see that all the definitions above refer to the skills and competences possessed by interpreters without explaining them in detail. At this point a definition of competence is required, followed by a description of interpreter competence and the competent interpreter who can be considered a professional when possessing the skills needed. As for skills, a proposal by Albl-Mikasa (2013) in which the author describes a model of interpreter competence based on five areas skills is presented and examined. As regards competence, according to Pochhacker (2015), it is a term that in general refers to a set of

22 SCIC (Service commun d'interprétation de conférence) is the European commission's interpreting service which cooperates with universities to ensure professionally focused training by, among other activities providing training for trainers. Learning modules for interpreting students available at <https://webcast.ec.europa.eu/skill-acquisition>

23 "[t]his active, attentive listening is quite different from other forms of listening, and has to be learned by the interpreter" (Jones, 1998: 14)

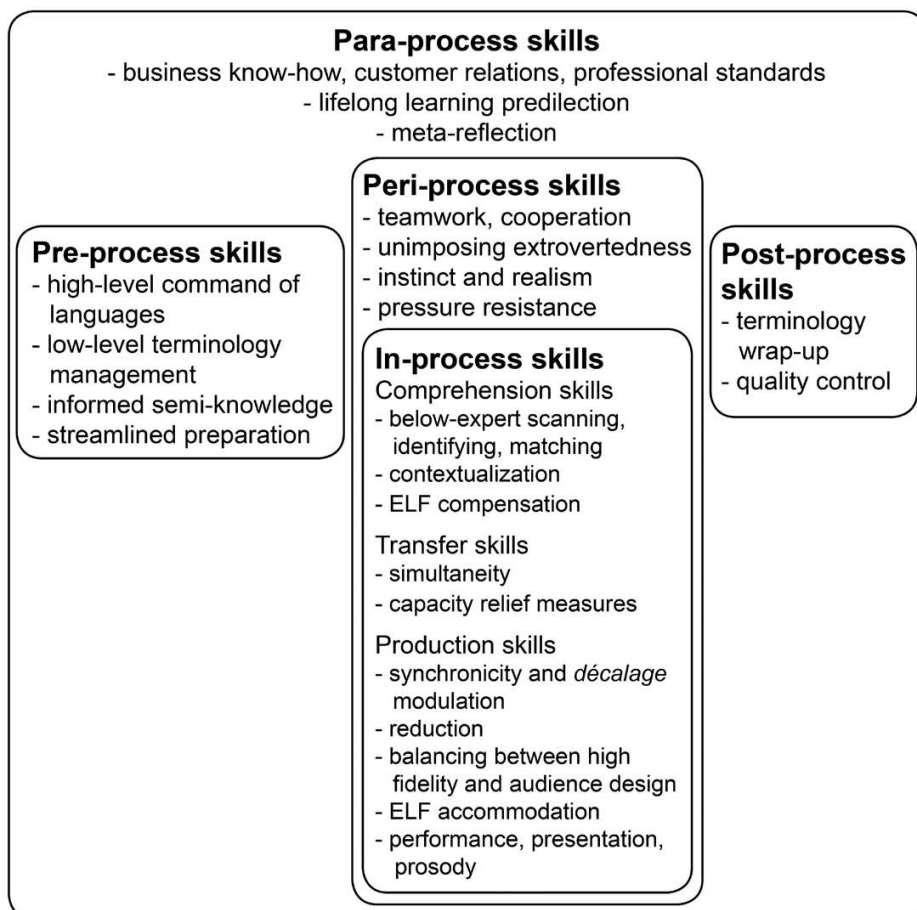
24 "Effective speaking skills range from quality of voice to choice of idiom, vocabulary, phrasing etc. So both what comes out of the mouth of the interpreter and the way it comes out are important in the overall effectiveness of the interpretation." (Gentile et al, 1996: 47)

skills required for high performance in a certain field. Checking monolingual dictionaries such as the online Cambridge and Oxford dictionaries, the ability to do something well but also an important skill that one should possess to perform well his/her job are reported as definitions of competence. It is interesting to find a very similar definition for the term skill, defined as the ability to do something well (in the online Cambridge monolingual dictionary). We can already see how difficult it is to find a precise definition of the term in question since it is referred at the same time as a set of skills, one of the skills required to be a professional and one of the ethical principles possessed by a professional.

Moving from the general to the specific, in the interpreting field, Kalina (2000:4), trying to give a theoretical definition of the competence of a professional conference interpreter, states that “it refers to the ability to perform cognitive tasks of mediation within a bi/multilingual communication situation at an extremely high level of expectations and quality, often in a team of several interpreters”. The author thus points out that the competent interpreter is able to process texts in a multilingual communicative event in light of interlingual mediation. In addition, he/she is able to act and perform “in a situation characterised by externally determined constraints, such as the pressure of time, lack of semantic autonomy and the potential interference between closely connected processes of production and comprehension” (Kalina, 2000: 5). Again, in the interpreting field, and referring to the role of the interpreter as a professional, Albl-Mikasa (2013: 19) points out that interpreter competence is “a general term for everything an interpreter needs to know and be able to do to perform a professional task”. It is interesting how the author distinguishes it from the notion of interpreting competences, which include the interpreting-specific skills required for SI and CI. Therefore, it can be said that an interpreter can be considered competent when he/she possesses the whole range of skills to perform his/her job as a professional, including among these skills the well-known competence.

As previously announced, Albl-Mikasa (2013), on the basis of interviews with ten professional conference interpreters, developed the following model of the interpreter competence.

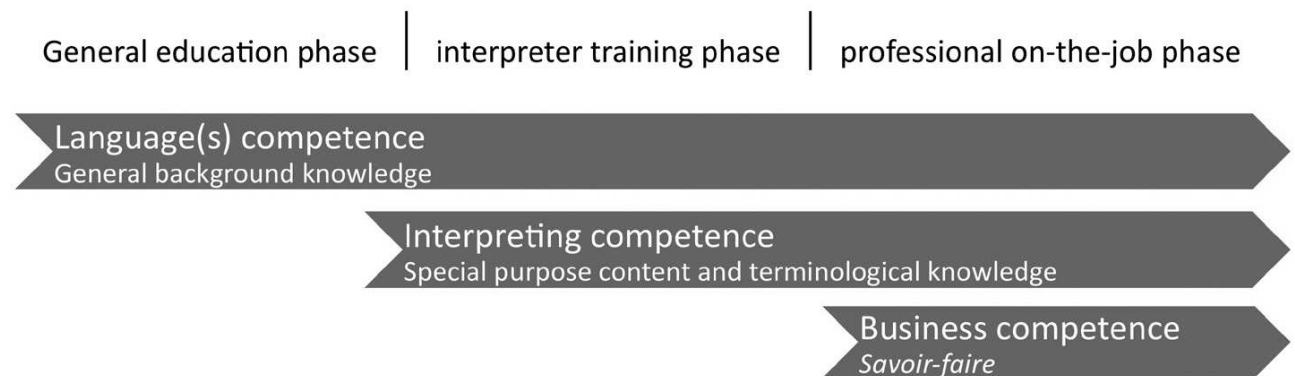
Figure 1: Process- and experience-based model of interpreter competence (Albl-Mikasa 2012: 63).



As we can see, Figure 1 includes skills organized into five areas and the corresponding interpreting processes: pre, peri, in, post and para processes. Among the pre-process skills, the knowledge of languages, terminology and the preparation are cited; as for the in-process skills, comprehension, transfer and production skills are cited; cooperation and team work are considered peri-process skills; the control of quality and terminology is listed in the post-process skills category; finally, as for the para-process dimension, a reference is made to the learning choice of interpreters, the relation with customers and other additional skills needed to build up the so called “savoir faire” of a professional. The author points out that interpreters develop their competence on a chronological basis and cultivate it during their working life. Indeed a three phase timeline is proposed below, together with the corresponding developed competence. During the general education

phase the language(s) competence is developed; during the interpreter training phase the interpreting competence, as explained above, is developed and during the professional phase the business competence is developed.

Figure 2: Timeline for the development of interpreter competence (Albl-Mikasa 2013)



As for the first competence, it is usually acquired prior to the university study course since the knowledge of one's mother tongue and foreign languages must already be at high level and then, during the university studies, it is developed and cultivated. As for the second competence, it is acquired during the specific training. Considering the simultaneous and consecutive modes, it refers to the specific strategies needed for the SI mode together with the simultaneous comprehension, transfer and production, and the note taking and mnemonic techniques necessary for the CI mode. The business competence, which is developed only after the study phase, includes all those skills which belong to the para-process skills dimension presented in the above scheme. What emerged from interviews is that the competence interpreters are most concerned with is language, since it represents a precondition to their training and courses and the main preoccupation during their professional life (Albl-Mikasa, 2013). Then, once the interpreting competence is acquired during studies, it is maintained on the job through work. Finally, the business competence, which is felt as essential, is built up during the interpreter's professional life through working experiences, becoming the so called "savoir faire". It is during the early phases that the development of competences is more formal, as emerged from interviews. Then, after graduation, the professional development begins, through courses, seminars and workshops. Finally, in the later phases, an interpreter may be too busy for seminars and courses and might rely only upon targeted assignments.

Once the interpreter competence is developed, it has to be cultivated. What seems interesting is that interpreters, interviewed at home in a face-to-face situation, said that they do relatively little to enhance and cultivate it. In general, they say that the enhancement of competence is carried out through learning or practicing by doing. One interviewee said “Many skills are built up and enhanced rather unconsciously. I guess that’s what you call experience” (Albl-Mikasa, 2013: 23). According to the developmental stages of competence, as stated above, during the initial stages a more formal approach takes place, which sees interpreters engaged in formal measures, seminars and workshop. Over time, the development approach becomes semi-formal up to informal, which means reading books, chatting and seeing films especially for the development of languages competence. It is a matter of integrating new languages into the every-day life of interpreters. When interpreters were asked how they cultivate their competence during the more informal later stages they answered that they do not enhance their skills systematically but simply by working on highly targeted assignments. Again, other interviewed answered that they maintain and keep up with their interpreter competence through work, by interpreting, learning by doing. Some of them come to realize that interpreter competence is something that evolves over time, in the course of the working life; it is a matter of experience, routine and practice.

To conclude, what emerges from Albl-Mikasa’s paper is that it is all about performing better and do each assignment at the best of one’s abilities that make an interpreter a professional. Among the qualities that a professional interpreter should possess, those interviewed cited the importance to serve customers kindly, make them satisfied about their work, remain calm and pleasant, on the basis of a good communication, being flexible and dynamic to adjust to the changing working conditions and circumstances. What is interesting from Albl-Mikasa’s study is the fact that the development of interpreter competence is chronological and starts on the basis of formal learning and measures which becomes more informal over time, while the working life of the interpreter starts. More intuitive learning takes place during the cultivation phase of the competence, which is mainly on the job as we have seen, but also before the job when preparing information necessary for the performance and over time, assignment after

assignment, practicing, affording courage, confidence, awareness, doing better each time. This is what makes an interpreter a professional, who, thanks to the working experience, is able to self-regulate his/her activity, self-impose the requirements and raise the expectations.

1.4 Language and culture

Since a reference to culture and its social dimension has been made previously by Palazzi (2007), a focus on culture and its link with language is needed. As Makarova (1998) states, since interpreters work with verbal material and have to transfer its meaning from the source speaker/context to the target speaker/context, the knowledge of both source and target culture is needed. The main constitutive aspects of culture which emerge from the definitions presented by Makarova (1998) in her work are: its social dimension, its behavioural components, the fact that it passes through generations and represents something distinctive for a community. In addition, it includes a system of values reflected in people's words, behaviour, attitudes. In her work, the term culture is used in its social sense in order to refer to all those things learned by people after their birth such as the language, the way of life, customs, ways of communication and arts.

A deep link between language and culture exists, that is to say, one cannot exist without the other and viceversa. Culture is reflected in the language spoken by the members of a given community so, when interpreting, the interpreter who deals with another language has to deal necessary with another culture. Since in a given community people's verbal (what they say) and non-verbal actions (how they behave) and reactions are conditioned by a set of values which constitutes their culture, it is necessary for interpreters their deep knowledge and management when performing in order to avoid misunderstandings in the communication between people who come from different countries and cultures (Makarova, 1998).

As for the link between language and culture, interesting is the thought of Kramersch (2000) who shares with Makarova (1998) some reflection points. Culture is defined by the author

as: “membership in a discourse community²⁵ that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting; the discourse community itself; the system of standards itself” (2000: 8). As Makarova (1998), Kramersch (2000) too believes that culture possesses two layers, the social and the historical one, namely synchronic and diachronic, which combined give rise to the sociocultural context of language. This means that, from the social point of view, people identify themselves as pertaining to the same social group since they share common attitudes, beliefs, ways of viewing the world, and values, reflecting them in the way they use the language (what they decide to say or not and how they say it). From the historical perspective, people identify themselves as members of a society since they can find a place in the history of that society, namely in the material production over time which highlights the development of its historical identity (Kramersch, 2000). Being related to language, culture is carried on by the way the members of a society use it, being not a culture-free code, far away from how people behave and think.

Another interesting aspect of language which emerges from Kramersch’s work is the idea that language means in two ways, both linked to culture: semantics, that is to say, through what it says or it refers to as encoded sign and pragmatics, through what it does as an action in context. Therefore meaning is created in two ways: not only through what people say but also through what people do with using words (Kramersch, 2000). The pragmatic topic will be analysed in the following section.

To sum up, interpreters need to possess a very good mastery of language and culture, of both their mother tongue and the foreign language(s), and a thorough knowledge of current affairs and cultural issues. They need to be: curious people, confident when speaking, able to manage stress and anxiety, able to work in team, to master also non-verbal elements, and to have presentation skills, to be able to solve problems, they need to possess a good memory, listening and speaking skills, and be creative in the most diverse situations and when facing problems (Cecco and Masiero, 2019).

²⁵ To cite Kramersch (2000: 8) “We can speak of discourse community, opposed to speech community which is composed of people who use the same linguistic code, to refer to the common ways in which members of a social group use language to meet their social needs. Not only the grammatical, lexical, and

1.5 Pragmatics

The pragmatic topic cannot be left apart when analysing the interpreter skills and competences, especially when the dialogic mode is used or the interpreter performs in a community-based context. Mason (2001), by comparing two different types of communicative events, one in a courtroom setting and the other in an immigration office, states that dialogue interpreting events are inherently characterized by interactional pragmatic variables, face threatening acts (FTA) and issues of politeness which represents constraints on interaction (Mason, 2001). In other words, different types of variables (verbal and non-verbal, which changes from culture to culture) influence the way in which the interlocutors involved in the dialogue event act, behave; viceversa, on the basis of their behaviour and actions, they have a certain perception of the participation framework in which they are inserted and the role and position of the interpreter (inclusiveness or exclusiveness). There could be changes in the participation framework which requires a “footing²⁶ shift” on the part of the interpreter. This means that he/she moves from speaking in the first person to the third person, which requires flexibility for the interpreter and makes him/her a visible participant in the interaction since he/she takes decision aiming at avoiding confusion during the conversation. Therefore, changes in the participation framework, caused for example by the multilingual competences of the interpreter’s co-participants, may affect the ways in which the interpreter act and participate in the conversation (Cirillo, 2017).

However, a definition of pragmatics has not been given yet. According to Yule (1996: 127) pragmatics is the “study of the intended speaker meaning”, which refers to the fact that when someone reads or hears an utterance, he/she tries to understand not only what the words mean but also what the speaker or writer of those words intended to convey. The British philosopher J.L. Austin, who wrote the book “how to do things with words” published in 1962 in which the speech act theory finds its roots, stated that “saying is doing” in the sense that an utterance or linguistic expression constitutes an action. Austin thought that the speech act is performed when a speaker produce an utterance of some kind. A speech act can be analysed from three different level: the locutionary level, the

²⁶ Footing is a term coined by sociologist Erving Goffman to denote the stance we take up to the others present in the way we manage the production or reception of utterances (Kramsch, 2000).

illocutionary level and perlocutionary level. As for the first one, it refers to the meaning of the utterance; the second refers to the illocutionary force, that is to say, the action that the speaker intends to perform when producing the utterance; the perlocutionary level refers to the intended or unintended effect resulting from the utterance. The same utterance, according to the context in which is uttered, can perform different speech acts, or can have different illocutionary forces.

As for the cultural context, as stated by Kramsch (2000), pragmatic coherence is created by people who make efforts in order to make the words uttered meaningful in a specific cultural and situational context of exchange. On the basis of the words they hear, speakers and hearers create inferences and give life to pragmatic coherence, which, as a result, exists in their minds. As opposed to the semantic coherence which relates word to word, the pragmatic one relates speaker to speaker in the cultural context of reference (Kramsch, 2000). Speakers, when making efforts to create pragmatic coherence, make use of contextualization cues. When talking about contextualization a reference is made to the meaning of a sentence uttered in a specific context which could differ if the same sentence is uttered in another context. When considering different cultures, the contextualization and pragmatic coherence need to be taken into account because it can happen that the same contextualization cue may lead to different inferences among participants in the communicative event and misunderstandings arise. As a result, there is a lack of pragmatic coherence and participants feel themselves frustrated, perplexed or angry (Kramsch, 2000).

Going back to the illocutionary force, the action that the speaker intends to perform could be apology, promise, threaten (Dalziel, 2020). For example, with the same utterance “the traffic was really bad this morning”, the speaker could: give an explanation (about his mood); complain; offer an excuse. On the contrary, different utterances could have the same illocutionary force: the act of asking for permission can be achieved in three different ways: can I use your exercise with my student? Do you mind if I use your exercise with my student? I don't suppose I could use your exercises with my student. These illocutionary acts could damage or threaten the face (positive or negative) of either the speaker or the listener. To be precise, as for the negative face, it refers to the fact that

members of a cultural group need to feel respected and not impinged upon in their autonomy, pride, and self-sufficiency; on the contrary, the positive face refers to the fact that people also need to be reinforced in their view of themselves as polite, considerate, respectful members of their culture (Kramsch, 2000). Since the face (one's own and others one) has to be preserved during interactions, if it is threatened by a FTA, some politeness strategies have to be performed in order to minimize the threat. Therefore, linguistic politeness strategies are those adopted by interpreters in order to modify and attenuate the threat to face or image caused by some utterances and protect his/her own face from the threat.

This means that interpreters, especially liaison interpreters, usually adopt strategies in order to modify threats to face while performing, assuming an active role of managers of the communicative event and, as a consequence, a certain degree of responsibility in the joint construction of a meaningful communicative event. This represents therefore one of the challenges a liaison interpreter has to deal with, being fully and completely involved in the triadic dialogue in which not only verbal but also non-verbal variables, posture, gaze, gesture, tone, and the physical presence of all the participant in the framework, exert and influence the way in which meanings are exchanged and negotiated (Mack, 2005). An important element to consider in order to perform a speech act in a successful way is the set of conditions which contains the felicity conditions. These are divided into three categories: sincerity, preparatory and essential. These conditions must be accepted and fulfilled by both speakers and hearers in order to perform an act. For example, a request needs two felicity conditions: the ability to do the action by the hearer and the right of the speaker to request the hearer to perform that action (Dalziel, 2020). Therefore, depending on the context, the interpretation can or cannot be successful.

As stated by Lestari and Hartati (2019), the previously cited speech acts have been classified through various attempts into 5 types: assertives (to express what people believe to be true), commissives (to express the intention of the speaker to do something, like offer or promise), expressives (to express feelings), performatives (acts which produce immediate changes like speech acts of the queen or the judge) and directives (attempt of the speaker to make the addressee to do something). This classification follows that of

Searle (1975). The authors (2019) also claim that a speech act can be direct or indirect. Statements, orders, prohibitions, invitation, felicitation are examples of direct speeches since they express a direct relationship between the form of the utterance and the function of the illocutionary act. On the contrary, indirect speeches are expression of an indirect relationship between illocutionary act and form of the utterance. For example, if a person walks into a room and says: “It’s very smoky in here”, he/she is making an assertion about the state of the room but the utterance could also be interpreted by the hearer as a request for opening the window (Dalziel, 2020).

1.6 Translation and interpreting: a comparison.

After having focused on the relation between language and culture and the important element of pragmatics, this section focuses on the comparison between translation and interpreting. When comparing interpreting and translation, many questions arise, such as how close is their link, are they interdependent, which one depends on the other, are they interchangeable, do the role of translator and interpreter converge and so on. The purpose of this section is not that of investigating the topic of their dependence or interchangeability in detail, but that of presenting the definitions of both disciplines, in order to compare their respective characteristics and highlight similarities and differences. Finally, the role of the translator will be compared with that of the interpreter. To put it simply, as stated by Cho (2022), translation is the activity of conversion of written texts from one language to another. Interpreting is simply defined as oral translation, consisting in the rendering of spoken words from one language into the other (Cho, 2022). A first difference already emerges: the medium through which the messages are conveyed is different (oral vs. written). In addition, interpreting is referred to as an interactive activity from the above definition, stressing the importance of the communicative context as more relevant for it than it is for translation.

Another definition of the latter has been given by Makarova (1998: 33) who states that translation is “a situation-related and function-oriented complex series of acts for the production of a target text, intended for addressees in another culture/language on the basis of a given source text”. As emerges from this definition, translation appears as a complex activity, which starts from a source text and ends with the production of a target

text, involving both language and culture. We can already realise that as for interpreting, this is an activity in which not only linguistic knowledge but also cultural knowledge are essential for the translator.

As for interpreting, defined by Makarova (1998) as a class of translation, it differs from translation as regards the following points: the source text is presented once, the target text is produced once, editing the latter is almost impossible, the context is characterized by temporal restrictions. As we can see, the two activities in question differ in the short term strategies applied by the interpreter who, in contrast with long term strategies applied by a translator, has less time to take decisions and has no chance nor time to correct and check the target text as happens for the translator. The volatility of interpreting emerges from the above definitions due to the time pressure and the oral communicative context.

Focusing on the source text to which interpreters are exposed to, a first point to focus on is the so called “linearity constraint” (Makarova, 1998): interpreters do not deal with a source text in its entirety as happen for translators but work on incomplete parts of it, causing much more pressure for the interpreter. A second point refers to the nature of the source text: interpreters work above all with informative texts while translators with both literary and non-literary, informative texts. As a consequence, according to Makarova (1998), the task of interpreters is that of conveying the informational content of the text in question, focusing on the transfer of the content more than on the form, as happens for translators whose task is that of transferring the content but paying attention to aesthetic features. Since interpreters are more concerned with the content to be transferred, in contrast with translators, they may tend to clarify and adopt explanatory strategies, making some parts of the source speech more explicit. However, when interpreters deal with legal texts, they have to respect the precise stylistic features and avoid additional explanations.

Continuing the focus on the transfer of information, both for interpreters and translators who deal with texts of which they are not author, it seems difficult to decide what are primary and what are secondary information. This is mainly due to the fact that, especially for interpreters, they possess inferior knowledge of the topic and technical terms in

question with respect to their clients. In this regard, Makarova (1998:45) reports the following statement: “interpretation is made for real time oral communication in which accuracy in terminological usage is less critical than in translation”. An important element for interpreters is the preparation prior to their performance which allow them to collect information about the topic they have to deal with, acquire specific terminology and collect information about participants. However, since the crucial point for interpreters is that of communicating the meaning of the message, accuracy for terminological usage is not always so essential as for translators. In addition, interpreters are not expected to transfer complete information: due to the volatility of the working context, they could transfer only partial information, incomplete, zero or missed information. As a consequence of the latter, misinterpretation may occur and the communication fail. However, an advantage for interpreters is that they deal with typically redundant texts so, if some information is missed or misinterpreted, it can be retrieved later during the conversation in the form of repetitions or reformulations. The interactive nature of interpreting represents an advantage for clients too, who can ask the interpreter questions and seek clarification in the case of misinformation or partial information, reaching a more complete transfer and understanding of the original text (Makarova, 1998).

Translators, in contrast with interpreters, are expected to transfer complete information from the source text to the target text and have to pay more attention to terminology, grammar and stylistic issues. As for the knowledge of the subject in question, translators have more time than interpreters in order to learn it since, during their work, they can continue with the acquisition of information, learning from the written text itself. It is clear that translators, in contrast with interpreters, have less time pressure when adopting strategies nor for the acquisition of extralinguistic information (Makarova, 1998).

In addition to the differences just explained above about the time of acquisition of the knowledge for both interpreters and translators in order to improve their performance, the way in which they process the source text is different. Translators can start translating from anywhere, skipping problematic passages and taking notes of their doubts in order to check them at the end of their work, editing them if necessary; interpreters have to process the text in order they receive it since clients impose the speed on interpreters who

focus on the communicative intent of the speaker, trying to grasp the essence of what has been said. We can understand how important it is for translators to maintain fidelity to the author's stated text and its form, in contrast with interpreters. In this regard, an interesting motto reported by Makarova (1998: 54) states that "interpreting is faster than translating, less linguistically perfect and elegant BUT equally faithful". It is clear that for interpreters what matters are not stylistic, aesthetic, lexical and grammatical concerns, as happens for translators.

As for the means through which interpreters and translators convey the processed message, interpreters deal with a "multichannel communicative situation" (Makarova, 1998: 55) since, as we know, they deal not only with verbal means of communication but also non-verbal elements such as body posture, eye gaze, gesture and non-verbal material (slides, diagrams, photos). On the contrary, translators mostly deal with verbal elements. Up to now we have seen how the working conditions of both disciplines differ: interpreters have to work under time pressure, they have to be able to take quick and instant decisions with respect to words, syntactic structures and pronunciation, be flexible, know a variety of words since they cannot consult a dictionary while performing, so they have to know synonyms, hyponyms, hyperonyms, and for this purpose the prior preparation is essential. They have to be able to react quickly, moving from generic to specific vocabulary, be able to paraphrase and reformulate sentences. To put it simply, interpreters have to rely on themselves when working since they cannot consult not only a dictionary but also communicate with a specialist of a given area or a colleague to solve some problems because their work is in real time. Furthermore, as stated by Gile (2005) the mastery of passive language, which can be acquired through listening, is much more intuitive than for translators, who acquire it through reading and is not so intuitive. As for the cognitive load to which interpreters and translators are exposed to, as stated by Gile (2005), interpreters are exposed to a very high cognitive load and need specific cognitive abilities while translators do not need such high processing capacity skills nor specific attention-sharing skills.

To sum up, after this descriptive section about the features of translation and interpreting, having highlighted similarities and differences between them, we can state that: there is

no doubt that a link between the two disciplines exists since both rely on a good mastery on the part of translator and interpreter of the working languages and cultures of the client's countries; world and relevant special knowledge is also required to improve the work of both translator and interpreter whose aim is that of comprehending a source text, adopting the best strategy to overcome an obstacle, reformulating the text in another language in order to convey an understandable message for the target audience. This is known as the transfer competence (Kalina, 2000). However, while their roles converge for the above stated reasons, they do not for the different working circumstances and conditions. Interpreters perform in an interactive and real time oral communicative context and have to take instant decisions under time pressure and stress, involving not only verbal but also non-verbal means of communication.

On the contrary, the work of translators concerns the written dimension and is not constrained by time pressure nor so much stress since more time is available for decisions making and edit the target text; not such high cognitive load is involved, but more attention to grammar and style is required, while interpreters are more focused on transferring the content of the message. It has to be said that, due to the nature of translation, a translator does not necessarily need to possess those skills already examined above in the interpreting section, that is to say, public speaking skills, communicative skills, the ability to cope with stress and pressure, active listening skills, memorizing skills and he/she does not have to pay attention to body posture or gesture or eye contact. As for ethics, translators too have to fulfil ethical requirements such as reliability and confidentiality (Kalina, 2000).

Finally, in order to try to answer to the question as to the type of link between the two disciplines in question, we can deduce that some basic skills (such as the transfer competence described above) are common for translation and interpreting but they have to be complemented by translation-specific and interpreting-specific competences (Kalina, 2000). This means that there are some components of training that translators and interpreters can acquire together while others have to be trained specifically. It can be said that cooperation between interpreting and translation exists, especially if we refer to the general theory of translation which considers them as two components of one single

discipline (Kalina, 2000). However, differences exist but a rigid line should not be drawn a rigid line between them. Further investigation of this topic would be interesting, even from a historical and theoretical point of view but it has to be left apart by now since, in the following section, interpreting will be the analysed again, to be precise the role of the liaison interpreter.

CHAPTER 2

LIAISON INTERPRETING

The aim of this section, as previously announced, is that of exploring the features of community interpreting, analysing the competences and skills of the liaison interpreter, focusing then on mediation and the link between mediator and liaison interpreter. Finally, in order to give a practical perspective of what has been explained in theory, a description of the main working settings of the liaison interpreter will be provided, namely business, medical, school and legal settings.

2.1 The context and the skills of the liaison interpreter

In recent years, the increasing rates of migration and displacement around the world and the mobility of service providers and service seekers has resulted in a higher number of encounters between different language speakers and, as a consequence, a higher demand for interpreters who can mediate the communication in these dialogic situations. The liaison interpreter, mentioned in section 1.2, is some who works in the community setting, from which derives the term community interpreting. Liaison interpreting, “interpretazione di trattativa”, community based interpreting, public service interpreting are intended as synonyms. The settings to which we refer to when talking about community interpreting are: public service, business, healthcare, school, immigration offices, refugee camps, and legal centres. The communicative situation in which the liaison interpreter performs are for example teacher-parent conferences, asylum-seeking interviews, counselling, doctor-patient interviews, legal advice, guided tours to name a few (Cirillo, 2017). In addition, it has been said that this type of interpreter is sometimes an untrained and ad hoc interpreter, often representative of the minority language speakers he/she works for and he/she generally uses the dialogic technique in order to facilitate communication between speakers of different language and diverse cultures. It can be deduced that the communication that takes place is a three-way dialogue in which the interpreter acts as a key player who gives every person the right to language and communication, that is to say, he/she gives to each person the right to access services equally (Cirillo, 2017).

What is interesting is the reflection of Mack (2005) on community interpreting: he defines it as “*altra interpretazione*”, which is characterized, as we will see in detail later, by the features of both interpreting and mediation. The liaison interpreter is the other interpreter, who shares with the conference interpreter the aim of the interpreting task but uses a different technique (the dialogic one). In addition, he/she usually works in the public services field and in the business field in order for example to allow migrants the right to use their services. Historically, the liaison interpreter was a powerless indigenous representative of colonizers in a powerful position. The liaison interpreter that we know today often works in a communicative situation in which he/she actively represents ethnic groups and has the possibility to take decisions aiming at successful communication, trying to manage it in order not to be a sort of intrusion for interlocutors but showing them a certain level of solidarity. The liaison interpreter should therefore know both theory and interpreting techniques in addition to having deep knowledge of intercultural features of interaction (Mack, 2005).

Starting from the definition of “*interpretazione di trattativa*” given by the AITI (associazione italiana interpreti e traduttori/italian association for translators and interpreters), community interpreting is defined as a type of interpreting which ensures the informal comprehension for small groups of people, except for consecutive or simultaneous interpreting techniques. What emerges from this definition is a reductive description of what the liaison interpreter actually is and does, with respect to what has been stated above, citing only the fact that he/she works for people in an informal context without using the typical conference interpreting techniques (Mack, 2005). A definition of community interpreting in line with the international standards “*interpreting-guidelines for community interpreting*” refers to the activity of “*oral and signed communication that enable access to services for people who have limited proficiency in the language of such services*” (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020: 81). Therefore community interpreters assist people for language reasons to enable them to access services provided by public institutions, healthcare services and social services (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020). It has to be said that the liaison interpreter actually shares with conference interpreters the aim of facilitating successful communication between interlocutors. In order to do so, he/she has to possess linguistic, cultural, communicative competences. What differs is

that community interpreting is not a monologic form of interpreting but a dialogic and bidirectional one since the liaison interpreter has to interpret from language A (native language) to language B (foreign language) and viceversa in a dialogic situation in which three people usually interact, face to face. The liaison interpreter is considered one of the interlocutors who actually participate in an active way because he /she not only has to transmit the message by translating it but also manage the evolution of the dialogue. This means that his/her choices and decisions have an influence on other interlocutors' choices and reactions and that his/her acts do not come without consequences. In so doing, being physically present near the interlocutors (not between them since they have to interact directly) he/she also has to pay attention to non-verbal communication, gestures and so on which can be different from culture to culture and could create comprehension problems to occur (Mack, 2005). Because of the above described interactive communicative setting, the involvement of the interpreter, emotionally and psychologically, is more intense than for conference interpreters. This means that the liaison interpreter, as previously announced, is not totally invisible but must not be a distraction for primary interlocutors and should remain impartial (Dalziel, 2020).

According to Dalziel (2020) among the skills he/she possess, linguistic skills have to be cited, with reference to selective listening, vocabulary, summarising etc.; then, in addition to the already cited intercultural and social competence, he/she should possess the pragmatic competence. Since the liaison interpreter has to manage the dialogue in order to make the conveyed message understandable, he/she has to adopt the following communicative strategies: humour, irony, sarcasm, wordplay, metaphor etc. In order to show a certain sense of responsibility to interlocutors, and make them trust him/her, he/she has to be empathic, a good listener, flexible, he/she has not to do long pauses when performing, but be clear and accurate. In this sense, he/she should not add, omit nor change any part of the speech so as to respect the intention of the speaker. On the basis of the context, he/she has to possess a certain emotional strength and ability to cope with stress. As happens for interpreters in general, he/she has to possess concentration skills and memory skills. When performing the liaison interpreter takes on the perspective of the speaker, using the 1st person (not "he said") and creates a relaxed environment (Dalziel, 2020).

2.2 Interpreting as intercultural communication

It would be interesting now to explore the views of Cho (2022) of interpreting as intercultural communication, analysing then the role of the liaison interpreter in this context. By this term, the author refers to the communication that takes place between speakers from different language and cultural backgrounds. It can be said that, if interpreting can be intended as intercultural communication, interpreters, and in particular liaison interpreters, are intercultural mediators/communicators who deal with both language and culture. At this point, since reference to intercultural communication has been made, two crucial elements need to be explored: culture and context. As for the former, it is described by the author as an entity with a performative nature (something people do) which is performed through language, the key medium, by individuals. People usually use the term culture with a geographical meaning when referring to the macro-differences between nations. However, in addition to large cultures, small cultures also exist and they are a key element for the author when referring to intercultural communication. To be precise, by using the term small cultures the author refers to micro-social contexts of interaction, regardless of national boundaries, in which a cohesive behaviour is performed by the participants who could be, for example, doctor and patient, teacher and parent, judge and defendant. In other words, small cultures refer to small entities such as hospital, office, family, organisational groupings.

The context to which the author refers to is intended as a field of power relations, which are structured in an unbalanced and asymmetric way, sometimes causing the breakdown of communication. The above cited power is closely linked to the interpreting topic and is what has an impact on it, both on interpreters choices and strategies adopted and on interactions of participants in general. So, if interpreting is intercultural communication which involves culture, language, and contextual power relations, it can be said that intercultural communication refers to patterns of behaviours performed by people in contextual power relations with language as a medium.

2.2.1 Power relations in the community interpreting context

According to Cho (2022), considering the community interpreting setting, the main participants are members of ethnic minorities, migrants, who need the services given by

professionals. The latter are in a powerful position while the former are not. This asymmetric powerful relation influences the behaviours of the participants in the sense that, when communicating, minority groups may feel themselves as powerless and inferior, behaving in ways which are interpreted by power people of dominant race in authority as simple ethno-cultural traits yet they are only behaviours which arise from the power hierarchies which influence them. In so doing, misunderstandings may emerge and communication can break down. In a context like this the liaison interpreter, thanks to the micro-power possessed (strategies, tactics and techniques) and bilingual and bicultural skills, tries to rebalance and reconstruct the unbalanced interactions within the small-culture frame of community interpreting. Not only are minority members behaviours influenced by people in authority but also interpreters choices and decisions (Cho, 2022). In addition, the way in which interpreters act is influenced by their perception of what their role is: they not only have to solve linguistic or cultural problems in order to facilitate the communication; they also have a social function. This means that they feel they are essential parts of the conversation and they aim at a successful communication in which, thanks to their role of social agent, they adopt strategies in order to empower minorities who are unable to represent themselves and ensure social equality (Cho, 2022). This is not an easy task nor a quiet setting for interpreters, who may think that, in order to solve problems, there should also be collaboration among the parties involved in the interaction, above all with the people in authority.

However, powerful parties do not often collaborate with interpreters, who act on the basis of individual beliefs, social justice and convictions (Cho, 2022). It is clear that there is a difference between what is prescribed in theory and what is done in practice. From this description, community interpreting emerges as a field characterized by language, culture and contextual power relations, with a social dimension (Mack, 2005). As for power relations, it has not been said yet that in a setting like the business one, the dialogue which takes place is a symmetric one: this means that the primary interlocutors, who come from different cultural and linguistic background, possess the same social status, level of education, and possess the same information about the topic they deal with (so they interact in a balanced power relation setting). On a contrary, if we consider the health and legal setting, the interlocutors interact in an unbalanced power relation setting or

asymmetric setting. To give an example, the doctor, who is the service provider, possesses power and information while the migrant, the service user, is powerless and occupies a lower social position. Before describing the working context of the community interpreter, a section to the relation between interpreting and mediation will follow, together with a focus on the profiles of the liaison interpreter and the mediator.

2.3 Interpreting and mediation: a complex topic

“Every interpreter is a mediator (between languages and culture) but not every mediator is an interpreter” (Pochhacker, 2008:14). This statement introduces us to the interesting and complex relation which undoubtedly exists between interpreting and mediation. The following section would like to be an attempt to explain the relation between interpreting and mediation, together with the analysis of the profiles of the liaison interpreter and the intercultural mediator, starting from the fact that clarify at all the topic is not an easy task since conceptual and terminological confusion exists.

Having already explained what interpreting means in the first parts of the present work, it would be better now to focus on the term “mediation”. The verb to mediate has been used at the beginning of this section to explain what the liaison or community interpreter does: it has been stated that they mediate the communication in dialogic situations. In fact, as stated by Baraldi (2014), who bases his paper on Pochhacker’s analysis of “Interpreting as mediation” (2008), interpreting implies mediation between different languages used in the interaction. However, in order to define mediation, this is not sufficient and it would be better to focus on the analysis made by Pochhacker (2008) on mediation. The latter can be understood following three analytical dimensions: mediation as successful transfer between languages and cultures, known as linguistic/cultural mediation; mediation as subjective transfer of the message from the producer to the receiver, known as cognitive mediation; mediation as successful resolution of conflicts and differences, facilitation of communication and power relations, known as contractual mediation (Baraldi, 2014).

As for the first dimension of mediation, it can be considered a synonym for interpreting since the latter always includes linguistic and cultural aspects (Baraldi, 2014). In fact, as

Mack (2005) argued, mediation is a service which facilitates both the linguistic and cultural communication. In addition, it can be intended as the dialogue between two different language speakers mediated by the figure of the mediator which makes that dialogue a three way dialogue (Mack, 2005). Being interpreters linguistic mediators, we can see how Mack (2005) emphasizes the role of the mediator attributing him/her the power to coordinate the interaction, giving his/her contribution by adding, reducing, expanding other participants' renditions in order to make a successful mutual understanding (Baraldi, 2014). It can be seen how interpreters, working in a dialogic situation, promote interlocutors' active participation.

The second dimension of interpreting as mediation emerges: the interpreter, when performing, takes into account the pragmatic dimension of languages and puts in practice his/her subjective autonomy which is considered by Pochhacker at the core of mediation (Baraldi, 2014). Up to now, interpreting emerges as a mediation activity carried out by the interpreter who mediates from a linguistic, cultural and cognitive point of view.

As for the third dimension of mediation, called by Pochhacker (2008) contractual or conflict mediation, it has to be said that it actually involves language mediation since language is the instrument through which the communication can be facilitated and conflicts in the interactions coordinated. Such conflicts could arise because of linguistic differences but also cultural ones. Thanks to language mediation and the ability of interpreters to work on utterances, modifying and adapting them to the social system and context in which interactions take place, cultural diversities can be re-contextualised and transformed into positive cultural forms, enhancing a positive intercultural communication (Baraldi, 2014).

The attempt which has been made by proposing the previous analysis had the scope of thinking about interpreting as an activity which is mediated by an interpreter who acts by means of language mediation, which is also cultural mediation and facilitation of communication, therefore highlighting the relation between interpreting and mediation. Before focusing the attention on the analysis made by Pokorn and Mikolic (2020) and that made by Pochhacker (2008) as for the topic related to community interpreters and

intercultural mediators, it would be better now to explore the mediator profile and his/her relation with that of the interpreter.

In the Italian context for example, a definition of “cultural mediator” has been given by the Italian Ministry of labour and social policies, stating that the mediator is a foreign person who has the same origins of migrants he/she works for and ensures an interpreting service based on empathy and the awareness that it is not only a matter of translating words but also the knowledge of cultural traits, values and behaviour of migrants which allow a successful intercultural dialogue between them and the public service providers. The task of the cultural mediator is that of creating a bridge between the needs of migrants and the answers of the service providers (Mack, 2005). From this definition, the profile of the mediator emerges as one who works both in public (school, hospitals, prisons, courtrooms, reception structures) and private (banks, insurances) fields in order to provide a service which facilitates both the linguistic and cultural communication between a minority language speaker, who is the service user, and the public or private service provider (Mack, 2005). In addition, the author states that the mediator tries to overcome possible obstacles to the communication by omitting, adding, modifying, informing, innovating. It is clear that this figure is actively and emotionally involved in the communication between the well-known interlocutors and that the final product is a joint product of all participants. The fact that he/she is a migrant too makes him/her able to understand not only the cultural traits and behaviours of the migrants he/she works for but also their feelings, emotions, doubts, needs. Being migrants means that they are usually excluded from the foreign society in which they are, making the mediator feel him/her self in charge of protecting the migrants who are powerless, vulnerable, do not understand the foreign language, behaviours, conventions and rules, and really need the help of the mediator to successful communicate with the service provider (Mack, 2005). An atmosphere of trust and empathy has to be created by the mediator who represents an interface between the two cultural groups. Therefore, in addition to linguistic and cultural competences, mediators need to possess communicative and social competences too since they have to interpret not only verbal but also non-verbal features of interaction, in which he/she plays a visible role and function. He/she has to transfer information and manage it, explain it and try to balance the unbalanced power relations already described above.

To be precise, when the mediator has to solve conflictual situations (interrogation, negotiation) or dramatic situation (hospitals, migrant support) he/she has to bear physical and psychological stress, and has to manage his/her feelings (Mack, 2005).

From this description, interpreting and mediation emerge as two strategies of the same communicative event chosen by the interpreter/mediator on the basis of the contextual circumstances (Mack, 2005). As argued by Falbo (2013), interpreting and mediation cannot be separated, as happens for language and culture and no rigid lines can be drawn to separate them. Therefore, if interpreting and mediation lie on the same path as on a continuum (Falbo, 2013) the profiles of the interpreter and the mediator seem to be almost overlapping.

There are other scholars who, following Mack and Falbo's ideas, consider interpreters and intercultural mediators not only strictly linked but two overlapping profiles. For example, Makarova (1998) stresses the fact that interpreters, whose aims are those of creating a successful communication, eliminating every type of linguistic and cultural obstacle, being able to take quick and appropriate decisions when dealing with a linguistic or cultural difference, fulfil the role of intercultural mediators. In Mack's (2005) opinion, it does not matter if the term interpreter or mediator is used when referring to the person who works in interpreted-mediated events of dialogical type (Mack, 2005). Again, as stated by Pokorn and Mikolic (2020), in European countries like France, Italy, Belgium and Germany the terms "interpreter" and "intercultural mediator" are used interchangeably and do not make clear their roles.

On the contrary, an empirical analysis of interpreted-mediation interactions in Italian healthcare services, based on a research project in which hundreds of interactions have been collected, confirms what just stated. That is to say, the intercultural mediator belongs to the same community as the patients and has to manage the communication taking care of both linguistic-translational and cultural aspects of the interaction but, and a new information is added, he/she is a non-professional interpreter (Baraldi, 2014). The latter is an interesting element to be considered as discriminant since, as Pochhacker (2008) advocates, considering the professional side, a clear separation between interpreters and

intercultural mediators should be drawn (Baraldi, 2014). The author thinks that, especially in the Italian and other countries' healthcare sector, intercultural mediators are preferred to professional interpreters since they are considered more competent in managing intercultural relations and conflicts (Baraldi, 2014) during public service encounters. In so doing, the Pochhacker's (2008) opening sentence of this section is explained.

However, if we consider Pochhacker's (2008) statement about the intercultural mediator who is described as non-professional and the fact that the liaison interpreter could be untrained and non-professional, we could easily think that the two profiles perfectly overlap. Since the topic is very complex and different scholars possess different opinions, in addition to the fact that the use of terms vary from country to country, the following section will investigate, through a comparison between the profiles of community interpreters and intercultural mediators in the European market, the differences between them, stressing out that a partial overlap actually exists but there is still too much confusion as for the topic. As we will see, the ethical element would be determining for the just cited comparison.

2.3.1 The liaison interpreter and the intercultural mediator

Having seen which are the working context and skills of intercultural mediators a question undoubtedly arises: are there any differences between liaison interpreters and intercultural mediators? Pokorn and Mikolic (2020) studies, based on a comparison of 13 deontological documents for community interpreters and intercultural mediators, are helpful in order to answer the question.

As for the terms used, it has to be said that in the European healthcare sector, the term "intercultural mediator" refers to mediator involved in cultural conflict or to community interpreters (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020). The term is also used by some EU institutions for language experts to denote non-professional interpreters (Pochhacker, 2008) who works mainly in the health care sector and whose role is distinct from that of community interpreters. The most common profiles related to this term in Europe are: in Spain it is a synonymous of community interpreting but in other parts of Spain it refers to a distinct profession; in other countries it is involved in cultural conflict prevention and resolution;

the Directorate General for Translation (DGTRAD) uses the term as a collective term to refer to a variety of different services provided by EU translational departments; in Germany, for example, the intercultural mediator provides interpreting services and is seen as an amalgamation of profiles like community interpreter, integration assistant and cultural mediator whose main task is that of overcoming barriers to communication and assist professionals in the healthcare and social sector with integration work (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020). Having read above, it can be deduced that he/she is not a professional.

Considering the task discriminant and not the professional one, interesting is what has been stated by the Olympic Training and Consulting as for the profile of the intercultural mediator, making it strictly connected or overlapping with the one of the liaison interpreter: “A variety of terms are used to describe the tasks performed by intercultural mediators. Among the terms widely used in Europe, linguistic mediation, intercultural interpreter, liaison interpreting, community interpreting, dialogue interpreting refer to profiles whose tasks are those of the intercultural mediator” (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020: 84). Generally, intercultural mediators are considered as possessing more skills than interpreters, as outlined in the WHO Health Evidence Network Synthesis Report 64, in which interpreters are seen as professionals who only have to focus on resolving language barriers while intercultural mediators in addition, have to ensure comprehension and facilitate relationship (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020). The EU project TIME too reveals a devaluing interpreting profile, describing the interpreter’s main task of focusing on language structure while, as for the meaning of the messages and the bridging of cultures, the profile of intercultural mediator is more fitted (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020). Following the “complexity line” of this topic, a reference to the Italian context has to be made. Here, there are three understandings of intercultural mediators: they are equated to community interpreters, with linguistic and cultural tasks, making the two terms synonyms; they are specialist in conflict prevention and resolution; they are non-professional interpreters distinct from professional interpreters.

As for the last one, in Italy the profile of the intercultural mediator has emerged as a community interpreter with additional competences, who provides a wider range of services than the community interpreter. We can see how, in the European context,

intercultural mediators could perform tasks which are similar or different from those performed by community interpreters.

As for the performance of different tasks, Pochhacker's (2008) idea about limiting interpreting to the simple linguistic transfer competence has to be cited, giving to intercultural mediators the tasks of resolving intercultural differences and managing social relations. In Ireland too, in the healthcare sector, the two profiles are separated since, on one side, the intercultural mediator is called initially to help users access the system and give them the relevant information to prevent conflict and mediate; on the other side, the community interpreter has to intervene, once the tasks of the intercultural mediator are completed, in order to interpret the communication (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020).

As stated above, 13 deontological documents to analyse the ethical positioning of both profiles have been collected in the healthcare sector because it is this one that addresses many community interpreting issues (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020). The analysis of these documents showed an overlap between the profiles since, as for competences, the linguistic, cultural and transfer competence appear in all the analysed documents; as for conflict resolution and mediation competence it appears only in the documents related to the intercultural mediator. Considering the ethical principles, confidentiality and impartiality appears almost in all the documents; as for advocacy, applied by the intercultural mediator in case of mistreatment of a party or a group, it emerges as central for intercultural mediators (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020). Therefore, what appears is that the main difference between the two profiles concerns ethics and in specific, advocacy as a key task for the emerging profession of the intercultural mediator. Other reasons for the emergence of the profile of intercultural mediator, in addition to the ethic one, are: the lack of qualified interpreters trained for the languages of the increased number of migrants arrived to Europe; the need to train ad hoc interpreters from these newly arrived migrants and professionalize them with the term "intercultural mediators"; the need of doctors and healthcare service providers to transfer their obligations to mediators (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020).

To sum up, as for the existence of a relation between interpreting and mediation it has to be said that it undoubtedly exists and that the figure of the liaison interpreter is representative of this link. However, if in some contexts the role of the mediator and that of the interpreter overlaps, some differences too exist between them. One could be the training topic; the other one the ethical position they cover (a strong and visible presence for mediators who often represent the public institution which provides services to migrants). In addition, as stated by Pokorn and Mikolic (2020) the profile of the mediators would be well-suited for tasks such as the provision of information on health and social services, the psychosocial support, the health promotion, the provision of information to migrants in order to access services; a professional interpreter would be well-suited in case of high-risk multilingual events, such as in asylum procedures, courts, police, situations in which an unskilled profile would conduct the communication to negative results (Pokorn and Mikolic, 2020).

For the purpose of this section, I will not try to focus in detail on the term mediation and the comparison between it and interpreting any further. Being interpreting and mediation so closely linked, some reflections about potential teaching combining translation, interpreting and mediation arise. According to Cirillo (2017) what is interesting is the idea of a mutual enrichment between interpreting and mediation in order to see them not as separated activities but synergic.

2.4 The working settings of the liaison interpreter

In order to complete the description of the competences of the liaison interpreter and the challenges he/she has to deal with, it is interesting now to focus attention on the specific settings in which liaison interpreters work: business, medical, school and legal settings.

2.4.1 The business setting

Starting from business negotiations, these usually take place between two or more parties in the form of interaction aimed at achieving the main goal of buying and selling, which is possible through the cooperation between parties. Normally, a negotiation gives rise to a conflicting situation since, on one side, buyers want to pay as little as possible and sellers, on the other side, want to sell for the highest possible price. In other words, a

mutual goal adjustment emerges aimed at finding a compromise, that is to say, an agreement (Cirillo, 2017). During the interpreter-mediated negotiation, not only are proposals and counter proposals negotiated but so is the influence and power of participants who interact following the turn taking mode. However, if participants to business negotiation found their partnership on an equal basis, in order to reach any agreement, a great deal of interactional work and decision making process is involved. The liaison interpreter, as in other triadic exchanges, plays the role of coordinator of the interaction, managing not only information flows but also turn takings and interpersonal relations aimed at maximising the agreement between the parties. This means that the interpreter has to select the relevant information to transfer and translate, participating actively in the conversation. Therefore, we can see that the interpreter is visible since he/she has to decide when omit or substitute in order to mitigate potentially FTA, misunderstandings, or fixing problems of different nature, acting as a filter to pre-empt conflicts (Cirillo, 2017).

An interesting aspect of interpreting in a business setting, for example considering an encounter between an exhibitor and a client at a trade fair, comes out: it is in this field that the gender aspects of interpreting are more evident (Cho, 2022). That is to say that business settings are stereotyped on the basis of gendered power hierarchies which see female interpreters in a lower position with respect to the males dominant interlocutors, who have power and high status. In a context like this, female interpreters' actions are limited and their decisions are influenced by the power structures just described. Cho (2022) describes examples of behaviours linked to gender performed by Japanese clients during business meetings with English interlocutors: these are male joking, off topic male communication and non-verbal modality. When Japanese men pretend to understand English during the meeting, using the nodding strategy, the female interpreter's advice was not taken into consideration because she was seen as the weak party. In order to understand how interpreters react to these male behaviours we have to understand who business interpreters are. There are two types of business interpreters: freelance interpreters who are hired for short term assignments in order to serve clients interested in building commercial relationship with companies based in another country and usually accompany the clients to the restaurant, hotels where foreign clients stay, cafes, factories.

Then there are corporate interpreters. What the latter often have to do is much more than interpreting: sometimes they are secretary of people in high positions. They work in a context characterized by role ambiguity and gender hierarchies in which, if the communication fail, it is attributed to the interpreter, putting her in a difficult position.

Talking about difficulties, as stated by Cho (2022), one of the main challenges for interpreters during business meetings are jokes: they are used to create a friendly atmosphere but since different cultures are involved a joke could be not so funny for one of the parties or, if explained, it is not funny anymore. Different interpreters adopt different strategies in order not to offend anybody and maintain a relaxed and friendly atmosphere in case of a joke is done. Interpreters deal with feelings and emotions of their clients so, when interpreting, they have to perform on the basis of their sensitivity, using both verbal and non-verbal means. However, if the field of business interpreting is not completely considered within the field of community interpreting because of the equal basis on which stands the partnership between the negotiation interlocutors, the communicative context in the medical field is more close to the community interpreting type.

2.4.2 The medical setting

As stated by Cho (2022), in the medical setting the main challenge for the liaison interpreter is that he/she has to manage a dual dimension which characterizes his/her work and is made of professional requirements on one side, namely accuracy, impartiality, confidentiality, and personal feelings and emotions on the other. In addition, and in order to make the communication doctor-patient successful, he/she has to adopt the right strategy. In so doing, the interpreter is driven by the desire to help the patient, deliver justice, empower minorities, by the belief in the duty of care, and as a consequence, he/she acts in order to achieve an optimal communication outcome (Cirillo, 2017).

To be precise, as stated by Cho (2022), if we take the example of Australia, a huge number of migrants makes this nation a multicultural one in which they form isolated and alienated groups of people who do not speak the local language (English) and the way in which they behave is influenced by a combination of factors (cultural, contextual)

consisting in the already cited small cultures of ethnic migrant communities. These migrant communities are the “others”, invisible for the rest of the society which is therefore multicultural only in theory, because in practice social relationships are unequal and there are hierarchies based on ethnicity (Cho, 2022). In hospitals for example, the power relation between doctor and patient is in favour of doctors who represent the authority while patient, above all elderly, possess little power. In this context, the liaison interpreter represents the ideal interlocutor for them because they share the same language and elderly look for an emotional support from them and a sympathetic ear. In this sense, a real friendship often rises between interpreters and elderly migrants who talk a lot with them, even about personal issues out of the medical context and this makes the job of interpreters more complex since there are norms of the government to be observed which regulate the private communication interpreter-patient. According to Cho (2022), examples of the complex healthcare context in which the liaison interpreter works could be: the interpreter that intervenes (by clarifying or adopting other strategies in favour of a successful communication but above all in favour of migrants, knowing the reason why they behave in a certain way) in the interaction between a doctor and a lonely elderly patient suspected of dementia for not having answered the doctor’s questions directly or between the frustrated doctor and a mentally ill patient which does not want to talk freely for fear of community gossip or between the doctor and a devastated patient to whom a terminal illness has been diagnosed.

2.4.3 The education setting

Changing setting, as for education, the Australian context is considered again as a multicultural one in which migrant communities, in this case Asian migrant communities, live in a less privileged position from the linguistic and racial point of view, isolated and excluded from the rest of the society (Cho, 2022). In the education context, this means that Asian children and parents who do not speak nor understand English well are often excluded from school activities and they cannot participate. In this context, unlike healthcare context, the power relations are not so hierarchical and, as a consequence, the intervention of the liaison interpreter during parent-teacher meetings is more free from structural constraints.

In this field too, as happens in the previous ones, the main challenge for the liaison interpreter is that of choosing the right strategy, that is to say, acting in the best way to facilitate communication, bearing in mind the care of the minority speaker. Asian parents strongly believe in a successful education for their children and invest on it as a solution to migratory struggles and to avoid future social barriers for their children, enhancing their economic, cultural and social capital (Cho, 2022). The belief in the so called “Asian success” is mainly attributable to the home country culture in which, following Confucian principles, children have to be loyal and obedient to their parents and have to follow the academic ambition. When Asian parents and Australian teacher interact during school meetings, two main problems arise: on one hand, Asian parents’ behaviour is often perceived by the latter in a stereotyped way, resulting in possible misunderstandings which are clarified by the liaison interpreter who knows the reason that stands behind that behaviour; on the other hand, school activities or recommendations held in English are perceived by Asian parents as racist, making them to feel excluded and treated in a different way because of their origins (Cho, 2022). This is the inferiority complex of Asian migrants who perceive any treatment as unfair, behaving consequently in a way which might enhance even more the stereotype about migrant parents. In this complex setting the interpreter may adopt strategies like remaining impartial, offering cultural advices, modifying messages, silencing an angry mother who thinks that his son was engaged in a conflict with other students because of his origins and so on.

2.4.4 The legal setting

Considering the range of fields in which the liaison interpreter works, the legal field is the highly structured one, in which power asymmetries are stronger. In addition there are norms, rules and codes (neutrality, accuracy etc.) to follow for the interpreter. As stated by Cho (2022), in the legal context, a monolingual and monocultural ideology lays at the basis of the system in which powerless are disadvantaged by this predominant ideology which, at the same time, is reinforced by the presence of minorities who do not speak the main language, English. The ideology has an impact on the way in which both interpreter and migrant act and on their credibility assessment. Ultimate decisions are taken by lawyers or judges in courtrooms and by immigration officers in the refugee context since they possess the authority. On the contrary, the interpreter is considered a non-person,

invisible, whose mechanical works consists mainly in producing equivalents and each intervention is often considered obtrusive and unfair. So his/her intervention is discouraged by the monolingual and monocultural system which embeds this type of communicative context, making the interpreter less active in the interactions. The main challenge the liaison interpreter deals with is managing a dilemma: on one side, he/she is bound by professional rules and institutional expectations and on the other side sharing the same language and culture of minorities he/she works for (accused, plaintiff, defendants or witnesses) makes him/her sharing emotions and feelings with them, making the context more complex.

As regards challenges that bilingual interpreters have to deal with in monolingual courtrooms the following can be mentioned: their foreign accent when speaking English which reflects their origins and negatively influence their competence and credibility; the fact that sometimes they are not prepared and does not know the language diversity or dialects spoken by minorities which makes the communication more complex, above all when migrants cry in addition to the dialect; the bilingual skill possessed by minorities (in addition to their mother tongue they understand English) creates suspicion for legal decision makers and the interpreter finds difficulty in performing for them (especially when dealing with technical terms) because they have forgotten their mother tongue and communication problems arise; minorities do not know the legal communicative conventions (such as yes-no questions) and show inability to answer to these questions because of their culture, influencing their credibility and performance (Cho, 2022). In these cases the interpreter intervention becomes crucial but, as stated before, it is often discouraged by the legal system.

In the refugee and asylum seeker context the power differential is even stronger than in courtrooms and the immigration officer is the sole authority who could take decision and possess an absolute power. The role of the interpreter here is even more discouraged and less considered while refugees are even more powerless. In this context the monolingual and monocultural ideology deeply influence the credibility assessment and performance of both interpreters and minorities. Examples of it are: the biases against interpreters and their level of fluency when speaking English (the dominant language); the existence of

stereotypes, as considering Africans liars (Cho, 2022). To sum up, in the legal field the idea that everyone should communicate and behave in the same way creates power imbalances and influence credibility and performance of non-legal people. Communication problems which result could be managed by the figure of the liaison interpreter whose intervention could be essential. However, interpreters are often biased and their work discouraged. according to Cho (2022), the desirable condition for the future would be addressing the pervasive mono ideology through a cooperation and collaboration between legal professionals and interpreters, who should understand their work each other, but above all the legal people should consider interpreters as a resource, as essential and possessing a potential role and believe in the possibility that sometimes the legal system could benefit from the interpreter's performance.

CHAPTER 3

TEACHING LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR INTERPRETING

The aim of this chapter is to explore how interpreting training involves the development of language competence, since clearly an interpreter has to acquire the four basic skills of a language in order to perform his/her work, in addition to other specific skills of interpreting. Therefore, the first section will focus on the description of the four basic skills of a language, namely speaking, writing, listening and reading, together with an analysis of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), whose focus is that of communication as the goal to be reached through the use of a language. This will be followed by an analysis of the skills integrated approach, which proposes the integration of the basic skills in order to reach the communication goal.

3.1 Speaking skills

We know that the fundamental skill an interpreter has to possess is that of speaking since speaking is the main activity when performing and for this reason this is the first skill explored in this chapter. Speaking skills, together with listening skills, are known as productive or active skill, as opposed to the writing and reading skills which are known as receptive or passive skills and which are also needed in order to become an interpreter (Scrivener, 2011).

As stated by Ma (2013), in the process of interpretation the speaking phase is the final procedure but it can only be realized on the basis of the successful fulfilment of four previous procedures (perception, decoding, recording, encoding procedure). Therefore, the speaking phase, which is the one that we see and which is considered the most important one, together with the speaking competence of the interpreter, is successful only if the preceding procedures are successful.

Historically, at the beginning of the 19th century, speaking competence was not considered the main skill to teach (Marlina, 2018). Now, encouraging students to speak about and discuss interesting topics related to their everyday lives is common (Scrivener, 2011). As suggested by the author, when teaching speaking skills it is important not only to motivate

students, to exchange their opinions, interact, communicate, but also, and this is relevant for interpreters, to teach them what the different genres or kinds of speaking are. Each genre of speaking differs in content, language, purpose and form. Since each variety of speech is characterised by different people, places and contexts, the student of interpreting needs to learn how to choose the best grammatical structure, or how to be polite or the best vocabulary to choose depending on the genre involved (Scrivener, 2011). This means that an interpreting student has to learn that, according to different situations, he/she has to choose the most appropriate way of speaking, which could change in the target culture if compared to its own (the source culture).

As for interesting activities helpful for students in order to develop their speaking skill, the author suggests: role play, real play, simulations, group discussing exercises (which, as stated by Bastias, Sepulveda, Muñoz, Lorena, 2011, enhance students confidence). Role plays and simulations are very helpful for the training of interpreters since they give students the opportunity to examine a situation from a variety of perspectives, involving body, mind, social and communicative needs (Pochhacker, 2015). An example of role play is the exercise proposed in the project presented later on in this dissertation. It is a type of role play based on a full script reporting a dialogue in a liaison interpreting situation, which differs from a role play based on a scenario which would give students the opportunity to interact in a more spontaneous way, being responsible for their decisions. The difference with simulations, which are a special type of role play, is that in this case one or more participant is involved in his/her actual real-life role (Pochhacker, 2015).

Among other classic exercises proposed to develop the speaking skill in general, Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul (2018) suggests exercises of asking questions and answering (like in interviews), miming actions, guessing, describe and draw, remembering (useful to train the memory, which is a very important element in the interpreting context since, when interpreters are performing, they have to remember what the interlocutor said).

As for liaison interpreting in particular, as suggested by Reima Al-Jarf (2015), the following are useful: breathing exercises (the students practice taking a deep breath, i.e.,

inhaling while counting from 1-12, then they breath out, i.e., exhale while counting from 1-12.), sentence paraphrasing and summary exercises (to be done orally), speech shadowing exercises (the students listen to a model such as a video or audio of someone speaking and they repeat what the speaker is saying in real time). However, the last one, even if the author suggests it for liaison interpreting seems to be most appropriate for simultaneous interpreting training. Again, the author suggests that it would be ideal to propose the exercises gradually, first interpreting single words, then a whole sentence and finally dialogues, increasing in length and difficulties. Finally, the author proposes interpreting specialized interviews (the students start by interpret easy specialized interviews with familiar topics, then the interviews increase in length, difficulty level and topic familiarity. Interviews should be selected from different fields: education, politics, IT, tourism.

Other exercises useful to develop the ability of interpreters to speak are suggested by ORCIT (Online Resources for Conference Interpreter Training) and consist in reading articles and interviews on different current topics, writing down some bullet points which help students prepare a speech to deliver to their classmates in order to present the topic in question and the main problems or discussion points. The feedback of classmates is very important when an activity like this is conducted in order to improve the next performances as for the clarity, structure, coherence, speaker intention, audience engagement. When proposing any speaking activity, Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul (2018) suggest that the three steps to follow are: warming up, practice, feedback.

With reference to the activity proposed in the project, that is to say, the dialogues to act out, the warming up refers to the phase in which the glossaries referring to the three specific contexts have been given to students, so they could learn the vocabulary and create a background; the practice step refers to the performing of the speaking ability in a real life situation (acting out the dialogue proposed) and finally the feedback phase refers to the feedback that students will give by filling out the questionnaire, but also that given by the teacher at the end of the practicing phase.

As for the preparatory phase, as claimed by Sandrelli (2001), it is helpful for students to read newspaper articles and magazines on relevant topic before the role play exercise in order to create themselves a background knowledge and a list of terms which help them anticipate the content of the interview.

It is clear now that one of the best exercises to do in order to develop the speaking skills of students in liaison interpreting is that of acting out, on the basis of scripts given by their teachers, typical dialogues in typical liaison situational context which take place between two different language speakers and are mediated by the liaison interpreter. In the project proposed, three different contexts have been chosen: the medical one, the legal one and the asylum one. In each dialogue there were three interlocutors: the interpreter, the provider of the service and the user. Different level of length and difficulty were proposed according to the dialogue. Not only does the person who performs the role of the interpreter practise his/her speaking skills, but also those who perform the roles of the interlocutors since, even if they read the script, they have to speak choosing an appropriate speed of speech, make some pauses if necessary, in addition to the fact that their different accent probably could influence the interpreter positively or negatively. A more detailed section about the project can be found in the following chapter, where findings and results of the questionnaire students filled will be investigated. It has to be said that the aim of this type of exercise is that of helping students practise their skills in general, not only speaking skills. Usually, when students do exercises like the one proposed in this dissertation, it is suggested to change their roles, so as to give every component of the group the chance to interpret.

As Scrivener (2011) suggests, in accordance with Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul (2018), in general the role of the teacher during a speaking exercise should be that of controller, when students work in groups for example, taking notes of their strength and weaknesses (here the teacher is an evaluator since he/she can evaluate their progress), and only at the end of the activity, should the teacher discuss the outcomes with them in order to find a solution for the errors they made. Another tip for teachers Scrivener (2011) and Bastias, Sepulveda, Muñoz, Lorena (2011) suggest is not interrupting the flow while a student is speaking in order to make him/her more confident.

Undoubtedly, when an interpreter is speaking during her/his performance, he/she has to manage a wide variety of difficulties and, as a consequence, the elements on which to focus attention during training are: the ability to speak in an understandable way (Bastias, Sepulveda, Muñoz, Lorena, 2011); organizing the ideas in a clear way; regulating the tone and the speed of speech; choosing the right register according to the context and the genre; regulating the emotions; using the right vocabulary and grammar (Bastias, Sepulveda, Muñoz, Lorena, 2011); being confident and not shy (Bastias, Sepulveda, Muñoz, Lorena, 2011); developing good fluency; having clear pronunciation and intonation (Torky, 2006); knowing the specific vocabulary. In addition, he/she has to use the first person when speaking, keeping eye contact with the interlocutors and be confident and accurate. Again, according to Torky (2006), an interpreter during the training has to develop the ability to manage the different aspects or difficulty of speaking such as: the fact that it is face to face and this involves the management of gestures, body movement and facial expressions (communication strategies); the interactivity which involves the turn taking which can be different from culture to culture causing communication difficulties. Since speaking happens in real time, hesitation and repetitions (only to cite some) in the interlocutors discourse are typical features of spoken language to which students should be exposed to in order to learn how to manage them; and as oral expression is involved and typical idiomatic expressions linked to orality can emerge, it would be helpful for an interpreter to learn some of these expressions in order to be fluent in case he/she has to deal with these (Dalziel, 2020).

As for the material to be proposed when teaching speaking but also the four skills in general, Setyiadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul (2018) suggest considering the following factors: who are the students (their background, their level and needs), what they have to learn (the topic), how they learn it (which material to be used) and what technique or activity best fit the aim. For example, with reference to the project proposed in this dissertation, what has been considered in the phase of preparation of the material was: the language level of students, a gradual level of difficulty as for lexicon or grammar for the three different scripts, a relevant topic for a liaison interpreter student. However, choosing material related to a real-life situation and which is the most possible authentic for

students is the best choice because only working on material like this can students be prepared for what they will have to deal in their future as interpreter.

Finally, I think that speaking and listening are two skills that cannot be separated at all. Listening to recorded speeches or watching some videos about liaison interpreted situations, paying attention to the performance of the interpreter in all his/her speaking features previously described, could be useful for students who are attending an interpreting training course. This exercise could be done before acting out a liaison interpreting dialogue, trying to bear in mind what was learned during the interaction and discussed later with other students and the teacher.

3.2 Listening skills

Listening skills, after speaking, are fundamental skills for an interpreter and the most difficult skill to teach together with the speaking one (Diaz Galaz, 2014). In general, as suggested by Scrivener (2011), when training students in developing their listening skills, exercises based on the listening of interesting recordings of real life situations should be preferred, following a task based approach in which the purpose of the exercise has to be presented at the beginning. On the basis of the language level of students and their background knowledge, exercises have to be graded in task and difficulty. The task should not be too easy so as to stimulate them nor too difficult in order to avoid them thinking they cannot fulfil that task. In addition, there is the possibility to give them some helpful tips to reach the aim when this is too challenging.

As for material, in general one can use authentic recordings, announcements, television news, films, live conversations, interviews, recorded talk, exposing students to different conversational situations (Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018). Preparation represents a very important step prior to the listening exercise: it consists in preparing students for a listening exercise by activating their prior knowledge, if there is some, referring to the specific topic in questions or, if not, giving them a list with vocabulary or a glossary so as to make them aware of what the topic of the listening is (Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018).

With reference to liaison interpreting, a personal suggestion in accordance with Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul (2018) is listening to authentic recorded dialogues but also watching videos that can be useful too, like videos of real and mock dialogues interpreted in a typical liaison context situation, since students can listen but also are helped by the fact that they can see how speakers behave, their posture, their facial expression and their lip movement, which helps them understand some words which are difficult to grasp. As for the preparation, it is very important for liaison interpreters too who, thanks to their preparation on the specific topic of the conversation they have to interpret, can avoid misunderstanding problems and achieve a better performance. With reference to the project related to this thesis, the preparation consisted in the provision of glossaries containing the main terms linked to the specific area of interest.

Questioning whether traditional listening exercises could be useful for the training of listening skills of interpreters, reference to what Herrero (2017) claims in this regard has to be made. The author argues that traditional listening comprehension exercises like multiple choice activities, sentence completion, matching activities used in general for foreign language teaching are not the best option to train interpreters who, on the contrary, need activities designed on the basis of their specific needs. The reason is that while traditional listening comprehension exercises are based on selective listening, listening comprehension for interpreting should be based on active listening. While the former consists in the listening of selected elements necessary to do the exercise, therefore not enough to ensure whether the listener has understood well enough to conduct an interpreting performance, the second consists in exercises which contemplate the type of comprehension an interpreter needs. To be precise, an exercise of active listening consists in paying attention all the time for the whole of the speaker's communication (made up of the necessary elements and details, since the interpreter has to convey the whole message) and decoding the message with all its verbal and non-verbal features.

Therefore, when listening to the speakers during his/her liaison performance the interpreter is being an active listener who is actively involved in the listening process following three stages: first, getting the sound and transforming it into meaningful unit according to his/her background knowledge; second, processing the information, storing

it in the short term memory; third, comparing the information with the already existing knowledge and recode it in a reduced form (Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018). During this active process he/she has to maintain eye contact with the interlocutors, which means that the interpreter is actively listening to the speaker, which helps him/her to catch some non-verbal cues from the facial expression and body movement of the speakers (Herrero, 2017)

As stated by Ma (2013), in order for an interpreter to be an effective listener, psychological preparation is needed. This because very often the interpreter is nervous when listening, maybe because he/she does not understand something very well or misses some parts of the discourse. What he/she has to do before listening is compose him/herself, build up confidence and enhance spirit to overcome difficulties. Since the interpreter needs attention and concentration while listening, he/she has to keep calm and cautious, even when he/she misses an idea, adopting strategies like continually fill in the gaps and referring back to what was previously understood.

As suggested by ORCIT, while listening carefully to the discourse, if the interpreter does not understand something, he/she can ask questions for clarification. Usually the reason for this type of difficulty is due to an unknown word or unfamiliar topic. Starting from the context, the interpreter should deduce the meaning of those words which are difficult to understand. It means that there are gaps in the background knowledge, so the interpreter should later look for those words, creating a glossary so as to be better prepared next time. In order to be an active listener, one of the most important things for an interpreter to learn is to avoid distractions and, in addition, to concentrate on redundancies and repetitions, typical of spoken language, in order to identify what is the important and useful information and what is repetition, focusing the attention only on essential information (Ma, 2013). A strategy which can be implemented by the interpreter in case he/she fails to catch a word while listening is focusing on the speaker's voice, his/her mood/tone²⁷, the register used, the attitude, the rhetorical strategies. In so doing, the

²⁷ As stated by ORCIT, the speaker can use particular adjectives or adverbs for drama, or use emotive language to get audience attention or using repetitions or particular intonation to emphasise some parts of the speech.

interpreter can create a context made up of non-linguistic elements which can help him/her understand the message (Ma, 2013).

Linked to the idea that the interpreter has to be an active and effective listener, reference to an exercise proposed by ORCIT for online training has to be done. It is an analysis exercise which consists in some different tasks. The first one is listening to a speech about a current topic, writing down, in order of importance, some bullet points which summarise the main elements of discussion addressed by the speaker. This type of exercise helps the interpreter to focus on key points when listening to a discourse and not to be distracted by details which are not so important. The second one consists in doing the analysis exercises just described following the same method but writing down only the linkers (but, nevertheless, although, moreover etc.) which are related to the main ideas. Then, using the linkers written down as a map, the interpreter selects the right linkers that appear on the screen and should come to the same conclusion as the speaker. The third task consists in writing down a mind map or a table with a list of pros and cons or some numbered paragraphs in order to have a detailed structure of the discourse. The fourth one is writing a one sentence summary in order to see if the interpreter is able to convey the speaker opinion accurately. Then, some sentences appear on the screen and the interpreter has to choose the best one which is closer to his/her own. The aim of this exercise is to make the interpreter aware that it is important to have a mental picture of the speech made of key points and links in order to have the context clear, leaving aside the details.

As suggested by ORCIT, the analysis of speech is the fundamental task for an interpreter when listening since, in order to reproduce what is heard, he/she has to recognize the structure and put the ideas in order, grasp the intention of the speaker, convey his/her tone. The interpreter has to be a detective who finds the clues in order to understand the intention of the speaker, which can be misunderstood for different reasons such as irony, an element which is deeply linked to the culture, and can be solved focusing on visual language and body movement of the speaker. When analysing the speaker's discourse, the interpreter has to distinguish between the mood and the factual content, logical and coherent connected by linkers, leaving aside his/her personal opinion. The focus has to

be on the main argument, leaving aside repetitions, or digressions from the main argument, anecdotes, details. The interpreter in addition, has to recognize the structure (narrative structure, contrastive structure and argument structure) of the speech of the speaker focusing on the typical linkers, making a visual map or mental representation of the speech.

As claimed by Herrero (2017), active listening is also known as empathetic listening since it “involves listening from the heart, allowing understanding, caring, and empathy to set in” (Herrero: 17, 2017). It means that the interpreter becomes actively and emotionally involved in an interaction in such a way that it is conscious on the part of the listener and perceived by the speaker. To be a more empathetic listener, the interpreter needs to suppress his/her judgment of the other person or their message (Communication in the Real World, 2016). A liaison interpreter, due to the characteristics of the mode of interpreting he/she performs, to the physical proximity he/she has with the interlocutors, who are often emotionally and emotively engaged in situations of danger or fear, needs to be empathetic with his/her interlocutors who often trust interpreters as their only source of help to access public services in their new country. As claimed by Herrero (2017), active listening is not a natural type of listening since it needs concentration for a long period of time and implies a high cognitive load for the interpreter. This represents the second difference from general listening comprehension exercises. The interpreting student needs to activate high demanding cognitive skills since he/she has to listen and analyse and decode the message, activate the short term memory, reproduce the message in a different language and coordinate all these processes.

It is clear that memory plays an important role when interpreters are listening, especially in case of liaison interpreting, since usually this type of interpreter does not take notes like the consecutive interpreter, so the liaison interpreter has to remember what the interlocutors say and this represents one of the difficulties of liaison interpreting. Therefore, if listening implies memory, exercises based on enhancing students' memory have to be proposed by trainers. As for liaison interpreting, but possibly for other modes of interpreting, as proposed by Dalziel (2020) during the liaison interpreting course I attended, a helpful exercise to enhance memory is looking at some different pictures for

a time, then close the eyes and try to remember which were the pictures. The same can be done with words, possibly written in unusual or ancient foreign languages. A similar memory exercise completed during the liaison interpreting course involved idiomatic expressions and specific terminology linked to different study areas. Memory exercises are also important to enhance speaking skills since interpreters, in order to render the message of the interlocutors, has to remember what they heard. As stated by Movahedi and Rahmatabadi (2016) some techniques for enhancing the quality of memory are retelling in the source language, shadowing, mnemonic techniques, short-term memory exercises with inference, newspaper/news translation, and speech translation.

A strategy, as claimed by Ma (2013), used to help interpreters relieving the memory load and preserve the processing capacity for other efforts is anticipation. The latter can be grammatical, syntactical and contextual. As for the former, some signals help the interpreter gain a clue about what could come next, like phrases and expressions; as for the second one, the meaning can be anticipated thanks to conjunctions which imply a logical sequencing between the different parts of sentences; as for the third, anticipation can be made through a combination of sentences based on grammar rules, idioms, fixed expressions and the logical relation within the context.

As regards the difficulties or the elements which influence the quality of an interpreting performance and that need therefore attention during the training phase there are: the understanding of names, numbers, dates, times, acronyms; the different accents, dialects, pronunciations, speeds, voices of the speakers who come from different cultures. Another important aspect of orality is that spoken language is different from written language and this implies a particular attention to the following aspects: the sound (usually students tend to misunderstand similar sounds so they should be exposed to materials which contain the main misleading sounds, considering that knowing the context is helpful in order to understand similar spoken words); the intonation and stress (these two factors have a strong influence on the meaning of spoken utterances since the same utterance if uttered with a different intonation or stressing a word instead of another, the meaning can change); the vocabulary and the syntax (with respect to the written form of English, in spoken English they are much simpler, less specific and interactive expressions can be

used by speakers); the pauses and fillers (pauses are used to give time to reflect to the hearer and speaker and if too long they are filled with expressions like “ehm”); the register, the hesitations, the length of a speech, the organization of the speech, the informal language, the idiomatic expressions, the moods of speakers (Setyiadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018).

The understanding of a message for an interpreter can be influenced, as stated by Ma (2013), by other factors, in addition to those previously described, known as contextual factors (physical or temporal conditions) linked to the setting in which the interpreting process takes place, like noises or time constraints which cause rapid speaking by interlocutors but also cultural elements. In this sense, different cultures pose different values on verbal and non-verbal elements. A high context communication style generates much of the meaning from non-verbal elements and gives a high value to silence, to which an interpreter has to pay attention, while a low context communication style gives more importance to verbal elements and provides explicit details (Communication in the Real World, 2016). Another influencing factor which can affect the quality of the performance is anxiety and stress due to the time pressure and lack of processing time but it can be also caused by lack of clarity of the speech, lack of specific knowledge or preparation of the interpreter (Herrero, 2017).

With reference to the project linked to this dissertation, listening difficulties for students who practise using the video dialogues provided could be: the tone of voice of the speakers (Italian parts were read by Serena Cecco, teacher of liaison interpreting and by myself and the English speaker was a non-native English speaker whose speech was influenced by his language variety), the speed, the accent. To conclude, as stated by Herrero (2017), no universal and fixed exercises exist to train the listening skills of interpreters. The best option is that of practicing, so learning by doing.

3.3 Reading and writing skills

As stated by Scrivener (2011), the second receptive skill, together with listening, is reading. At first sight and in contrast with listening and speaking skills, reading and writing skills may seem to be less important or a secondary skill as far as interpreting is

concerned. However, even if they are not fundamental skills a liaison interpreter needs and uses in order to perform his/her job, they are important and necessary too, as we will see in this section, especially reading skills in the preparation phase. In this section, a brief reference to writing skills as productive skills will be made, in particular with a description on note-taking typical of consecutive interpreting.

As for reading tasks that could be done during interpreting training, the following could be useful. The first is that of sight translation, which is defined as the translation of a text by the interpreter from the source language into the target language simultaneously (Nunziato, s.d.). It is considered a mode of interpreting, which may be used, for example, in liaison sessions, and it also as training for simultaneous interpreting. It is clear that in order to do sight translation a person needs to possess reading skills, which imply the mastery of language register and syntax, ability to manipulate words, the awareness of language usage both in the source and target language, in addition to semantic and content mastery and ability to take fast decisions (Nunziato, s.d.). On the basis of personal experience, I would argue that practicing this mode of interpreting is useful since the fact that you have a text in front of you, which you can look at in order to translate/interpret a specific part, can reassure you: the words are visible and not only sounds that you hear only once, as in liaison interpreting. Nevertheless, it is nevertheless a complex skill to master: you need to possess a wide range of reading skills, and it can be considered a first step in the path towards the interpreting of speech.

Other reading tasks include: reading the script of a dialogue written in English, for example, in order to translate it, or a part of it, into Italian; reading texts and materials on a particular topic linked to the topic of the dialogue a person will interpret in order to create background knowledge, learn some vocabulary and gain awareness of that specific area of interest.

In view of the second and third types of reading exercises mentioned above, it can be assumed that reading skills are useful in the preparatory phase of interpreting, liaison interpreting too. To be precise, at the beginning of a training course, before practicing a given dialogue on a given topic, interpreting students usually read texts of different types

and conduct research on a that topic in order to learn new vocabulary, enter in depth into the theme, and create a list of terminology or glossaries together with lists of idiomatic expressions. When reading these texts or the script of a dialogue or during sight translation if there is the background knowledge, it can be activated. In addition, before the interpreting session, some predictions about the topic in question can be made (Bastias, Sepulveda, Muñoz, Lorena, 2011).

When reading texts and doing research, students deal with a great quantity of material so they have to put into practice reading strategies like scanning (reading a text to identify a specific information) or skimming (quickly reading a text to get the general idea) (Bastias, Sepulveda, Muñoz, Lorena, 2011). In addition, they have to develop their reading comprehension skills, such as the ability to decode a text, interpret the content, decode the messages, activate the vocabulary, grammar and syntax knowledge and the ability to summarize (Ma, 2013).

In addition to the reading of texts in the phase prior to the practicing of interpreting and to the reading of texts to sight translate, reading skills are necessary to read notes. Note taking, as already mentioned in Chapter One, is a typical technique used by the interpreter during consecutive interpreting. On the contrary, this is not a usual technique of liaison interpreting. The practice of note-taking represents a supplementary way for the memory to secure the recording procedure, which is the one devoted to the memorization of messages by interpreters and can assure a more efficient performance (Ma, 2013). Another example of the application of reading skills in interpreting concerns the reading of the list of main points of speech written during listening tasks undertaken by the student, together with the list of linkers and the other elements written down during the listening tasks presented in the listening section.

We can easily assume that all the four language skills are linked one another during the interpreting activity since, as explained above, the interpreter, while listening, writes notes which are read during the production/speaking phase. A question that could arise and that represents, in my opinion, a reflection point is: can language skills be taught separately in the teaching of interpreting and the teaching of a foreign language in

general? I would argue that it is almost impossible to separate the language skills teaching. Following an integrated approach could be the best option (Setyiadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018). A reference to this theme will be made later in this chapter.

Among the difficulties a student can face reading a text (an article for the preparation of a glossary or a script of a dialogue to translate or a script of a dialogue to perform with his/her classmates or the script of a dialogue to sight translate) there are comprehension problems such as the following: the content is difficult to understand because it refers to a topic which is not familiar; there are complex structures from a syntactical or grammatical perspective; there are unknown or unfamiliar words (Bastias, Sepulveda, Muñoz, Lorena, 2011).

According to Setyiadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul (2018), as for material to read, and considering the scripts of the dialogues to act out during a liaison interpreting training, different topics may be picked, usually those typical of liaison interpreting situations, in addition to texts of different lengths and different levels of difficulties (for example as regards grammar, syntax, terminology, content). A suggestion made by Herring (2005) is that when selecting the right material and exercises a teacher should do so in view of the skills to be acquired in the skill progression. Finally, as concerns what a student can learn thanks to reading exercises there are the following sub-skills: learning new vocabulary; learning to think critically; producing summaries; selecting the main ideas; distinguishing between important details and those which are less important; making predictions (Setyiadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018).

We have already seen in the previous sections that the technique of note-taking, used above all by consecutive interpreters, is a technique which involves almost all skills of a language, in particular the writing skills. As claimed by Ma (2013), in order to make the notes convenient to be read out, the contents written down should not be too much to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretation. Spaces and diagonals must be added after each sentence, and lines can be drawn when a long paragraph is over. This use of symbols will help the interpreter to make clarity in his/her notes, highlighting when an interpreting unit starts and finishes. What Ma (2013) states is that what an interpreter needs to note is

not actual words but the information contained in them. Details, numbers, dates are important to note but what is more important is what these elements refer to. A dilemma that interpreters face is that they focus most of their attention on note taking and lose their concentration on listening, without finding the right balance between the two simultaneous tasks. When an interpreter takes notes he/she should do it vertically, which helps give logic and order to the sense units. In this way the interpreter can follow the trace of thoughts of the speaker logically (Ma, 2013).

3.4 The importance of communication through the use of a language

We have seen in the previous sections that the skills of a language are undoubtedly linked to one another. Considering interpreting, only to cite some of the training exercises, the listening ones proposed by ORCIT imply not only listening skills but also writing since students have to take notes while doing the listening exercise. In addition, with note taking for example, interpreters have to listen to the speakers and simultaneously take notes, then, while interpreting (speaking) they are helped by the reading of the notes previously taken. Again, the exercises of sight translation involve both the reading and speaking skills of interpreters. Role plays and simulations too involve the reading of the instructions given to students and then speaking skills.

It is clear therefore that the teaching of a language and its skills cannot but consider this relationship and that the teaching of interpreting too, among its aims, has that of developing the language competence of interpreters. Language competence, as already said, is essential for interpreters in order to perform their work even if some other specific skills of interpreting are needed. The latter can be called sub-skills such as: vocabulary, memory functions, cultural traits knowledge, body gesture, pragmatics, use of interpreting strategies and so on. It has also been said that, and this is more evident when interpreters face some comprehension difficulties during their performance and are not able to deliver the message in all its details, the main aim should be the understandable communication of the speaker's message (uttered in a source language) to the listener, using another language (a target language) and focusing on the meaning of the message. Thus, the interpreter has to possess the communicative competence to perform his/her work, that is to say, he/she has to possess the ability to interact naturally using a language

(Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018). As stated by the authors, the principle of the CLT approach relies on the fact that only if overall communication is practiced, especially through activities which involve the use of a language in real life contexts, can language learning and skills be developed.

As a consequence, if we consider Communicative Language Teaching (Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018), the language is seen as a means, and not an object of study, through which reaching communicative competence, and communication is the main aim of teaching a language and its skills. Considering what is stated above, this is true therefore even for the interpreting teaching. As claimed by the authors (2018), among the variety of methods that can be taken into account to teach a language, considering it a means to communicate, there is the integrated approach. Following this approach, skills cannot be taught in isolation, but in an integrated way, among them or with other subskills of a language, namely vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation and other subskills.

Thanks to the learning of a language following the integrated approach, students can interact naturally using language in an authentic way, that is to say, as in real life communication in which all skills and sub skills of a language are needed and put into practice. This is the reason why teachers should propose activities linked to real life communicative events, so students learn how people interact every day (Setyadi, Sukirlan and Mahpul, 2018).

As for activities, there is an approach which bases its functioning on activities or tasks that students develop: it is the the task based learning approach (TBL). The person who first developed the TBL was Prabhu (1987) who thought that students learn a language better if they focus on task. As states Bunyamin (2017) it is the most effective way to learn a language since tasks provide students with opportunities to use the language as a vehicle. Each task has an objective so students interacting, discussing and solving problems, use the language to reach that objective and focus more on meaning than on the form. In so doing, communicative skills of learners, who are immersed in a meaningful situation, are developed. This means that students are involved in the completion of tasks which are related to real world activities and, by performing them in

classroom, they can communicate in a natural context. following this learning method, students not only acquire a new language but above all they can practice it. the importance of this approach is that it involves the four language skills therefore it can be said that it is an example of integrated teaching approach.

With reference to interpreting, we have seen that the best exercises to propose to students are those based on real life situations, as happens in the project of this dissertation. In fact, we will see in the next chapter that three dialogues linked to three different typical liaison contexts are proposed to students in order to help them develop their interpreting skills in the areas of school, health and law. Only by so doing, can students be aware of how liaison interpreting contexts can be in real life. As already said, in this sense an interesting activity for interpreter students can be that of listening to and watching recordings or videos of real interpreted dialogues.

To conclude, it can be said that a liaison interpreter, even if during his/her performance the main skills put into practice are listening and speaking skills, in addition to the sub-skills already described, it is however necessary to develop the other language skills because, as explained by the CLT approach, they are necessary to allow a person to communicate effectively through the use of a language.

CHAPTER 4

THE PROJECT

The aim of this concluding chapter is that of describing the practical part of the present dissertation, that is to say, the project. We have seen that in the first three chapters an overview of interpreting has been provided, moving from a general description of it in chapter one, together with a specific analysis of the liaison interpreting mode and the skills needed by the liaison interpreter, to an investigation on the four main skills of a language, which need to be acquired by an interpreter to perform his/her work.

In this chapter, a description of the different phases which characterizes the project is presented, starting from the first step that focuses on the research I conducted in order to create the corpus, the terminology list in *fairterm*²⁸; the second step which focuses on the preparation of the glossaries, the translation and recording of the dialogues interpreted by Serena Cecco, Samba Krubally and myself; the third step which refers to the analysis of the answers given by students to the questionnaire proposed, which represents feedback on their impressions of the materials they used.

As for the topics included in the project, typical liaison situations have been chosen and typical dialogues which take place in those contexts between public service providers and service users have been prepared. The liaison contexts I refer to are: health, school and law. To be precise, the three dialogues in questions are: “The kidney transplant”, which reports a dialogue between a man, Bakeka, who wishes to donate his kidney to his cousin and needs the help of a liaison interpreter in his dialogue with the doctor who is explaining the procedure; “The student loan” which reports the dialogue mediated by the interpreter between a new student having some problems obtaining a scholarship and the admissions officer, who helps him obtain a student loan and finally “The Court house”, which reports a dialogue between Ahmed, an asylum seeker whose request for international protection has been rejected and decides to appeal against the Ministry of Interiors and the judge who, during the court proceedings, uses the official language of the country not spoken

²⁸ *Fairterm* is a tool used to compile multilingual terminological records. It is free and it supports 24 official European languages in addition to Chinese, Turkish, Japanese and Russian. It can be used in two different working modes: individual or collaborative.

by Ahmed who, for this reason, needs the help of an interpreter. As we can deduce, all three dialogues take part to the migrant context.

As for the aim of the present project, it wishes to offer an help for liaison interpreting students during their education. Since the dialogues are recorded and uploaded in the university website, students can practise their interpreting skills whenever they want, following the instructions provided to them. First of all they have to develop a background knowledge using the glossaries proposed and carrying out some research on the topic; then, they can watch the video and do the interpreting, recording themselves; finally, they can assess their performance by downloading the script and checking their version.

4.1 The introductory phase: the research

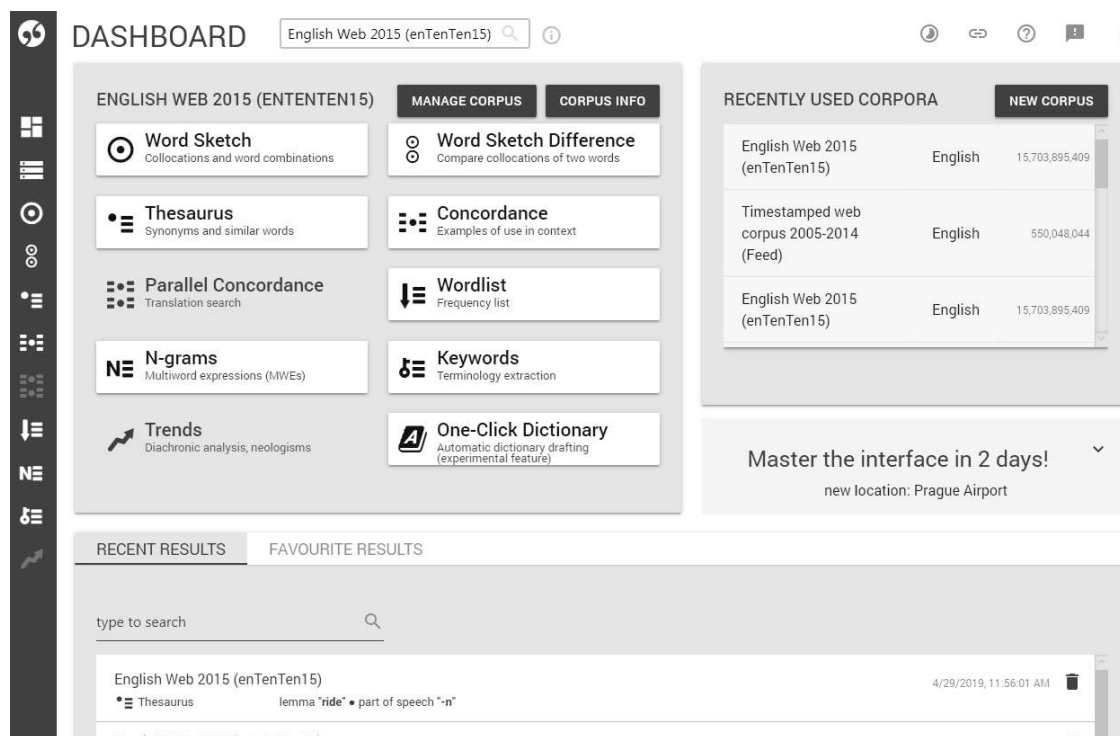
As stated in the introduction, the first step of this project was the research I conducted in order to create different corpora related to the different topics in question. The aim of collecting corpora (see Sinclair, 2005) both in English and Italian was that of creating a background on the migration context in order to be able to collect the main terms related to migrants and their usual needs in the above mentioned context and compile then the terminological cards on *fairterm*. To be precise, the main focus of my research was on the following topics: migration, asylum seekers, refugees, citizenship, residence permit, international protection, foreign students integration, migrants at school.

First I started working in Italian, collecting all the documents that seemed to be helpful and related to the migration context. The types of documents I looked for were: norms, directives, decrees, manuals, guides for migrants, reports, reviews, vademecum, articles and documents from accredited websites as those cited below. Many of these were written both in Italian and English.

The types of Italian websites I consulted were: *questura* and *prefettura* websites, Ministry of the Interior, *polizia di stato*, Ministry of Education University and Research (MIUR), the Italian Government, UNHCR (United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees), EU Commission website, SPRAR (*sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati*), ASGI (*associazione studi giuridici sull'immigrazione/ association for juridical studies on*

immigration), OIM (*organizzazione internazionale migrazioni/* IOM international organization for migration). As for English, I also consulted the English version of some of these websites, especially: EU commission, UNHCR, EU Council, EMN, IOM, ASGI. Having collected all the documents in Italian and then in English, I could start the terminological work. In order to extract the list of terms using *Sketchengine*, first I had to transform the texts I collected from mainly pdf to txt format since the program works processing only this type of format. A brief description of *Sketchengine* will follow. *Sketchengine* is a tool used by translators, terminologists, lexicographers, linguists, students, teachers in order to explore how languages work. Thanks to this tool, text corpora can be analyzed to identify what is typical and what is rare in a language, what is usual and what is unusual. As we can see from the following picture, this tool allows users to use many different functions as: finding the concordances, the collocations, the synonyms, the keywords, the frequency of words and so on.


Figure 3: *Sketchengine* dashboard



The function I used to extract the list of terms using *Sketchengine* was the “keywords” function. Before doing so, I had to upload on *Sketchengine* the corpora I had previously downloaded. Finally, having obtained the list of Italian keywords I was ready to start the

terminological work with the support of *fairterm*. This is a tool which allow users to compile multilingual (24 languages) terminological records.

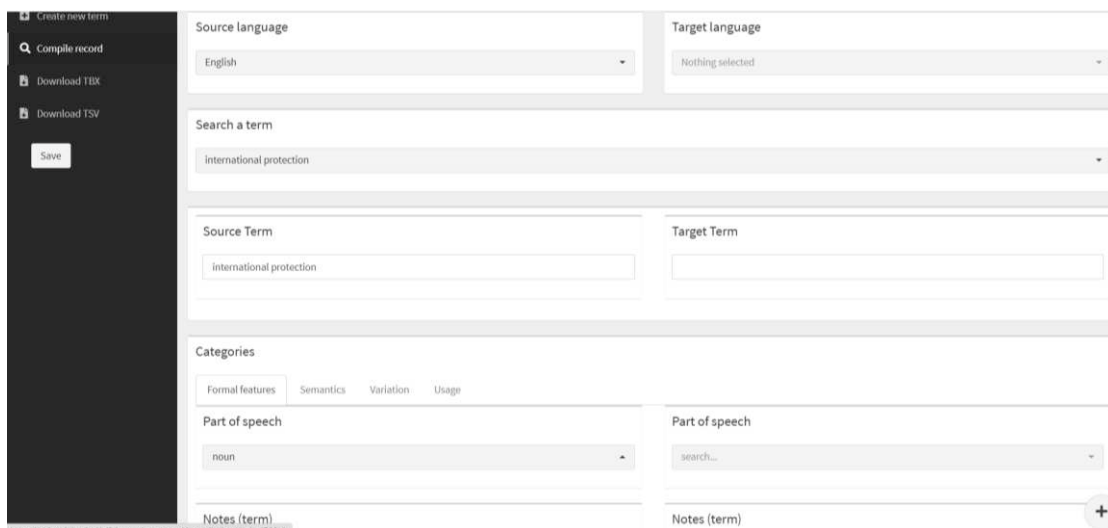
Figure 4: *Fairterm*: create new term



The screenshot shows the 'FAIR Term' application interface. On the left is a dark sidebar with navigation options: 'Create new term' (selected), 'Compile record', 'Download TBX', and 'Download TSV', along with a 'Save' button. The main content area has a header 'FAIR Term' and a hamburger menu. Below the header, there are two main sections: 'Source language of your term' with a dropdown menu set to 'Italian', and 'Term' with a text input field containing 'permesso di soggiorno'. At the bottom, there is an 'Add new term' button.

The first step is that of creating a new term, selecting the source language and writing the term (singular, masculine). Having added the new term, the record can be compiled. As we can see from the picture below, each terminology card requires the completion of different categories: formal features, semantics, variation and usage.

Figure 5: *Fairterm*: compile record



The screenshot shows the 'FAIR Term' application interface for compiling a record. The sidebar is the same as in Figure 4, with 'Compile record' selected. The main content area has a header 'FAIR Term' and a hamburger menu. Below the header, there are several sections: 'Source language' (dropdown set to 'English') and 'Target language' (dropdown set to 'Nothing selected'); 'Search a term' (dropdown set to 'International protection'); 'Source Term' (text input field containing 'international protection') and 'Target Term' (empty text input field); 'Categories' (tabs for 'Formal features', 'Semantics', 'Variation', and 'Usage'); 'Part of speech' (dropdown set to 'noun') and another 'Part of speech' (dropdown set to 'search...'); and 'Notes (term)' (text input field with a '+' button). At the bottom, there is a URL: <https://ibmv.dcu.ie/ont/d/fairterm/terminology/compilation/#tab=4500-1>.

Formal features and variations are the two main grammatical categories (part of speech, orthographic variant, acronym, abbreviation) while semantics and usage are those categories which required more work: the definition of the term, the URL and the source of the definition, if it has synonyms, a usage context in which that term appears, the URL

and the source of the context. I uploaded about one hundred terms in Italian and one hundred equivalent terms in English.

In the following figures it is possible to see screenshots of the *fairterm* cards referring to an Italian term and its equivalent English term which is, in my opinion, one of the main emblematic terms related to the migration context: *richiedente asilo*/asylum seeker. I have decided to attach the main significative categories, namely semantics and usage.

Figure 6: *Fairterm*: semantics of *richiedente asilo*

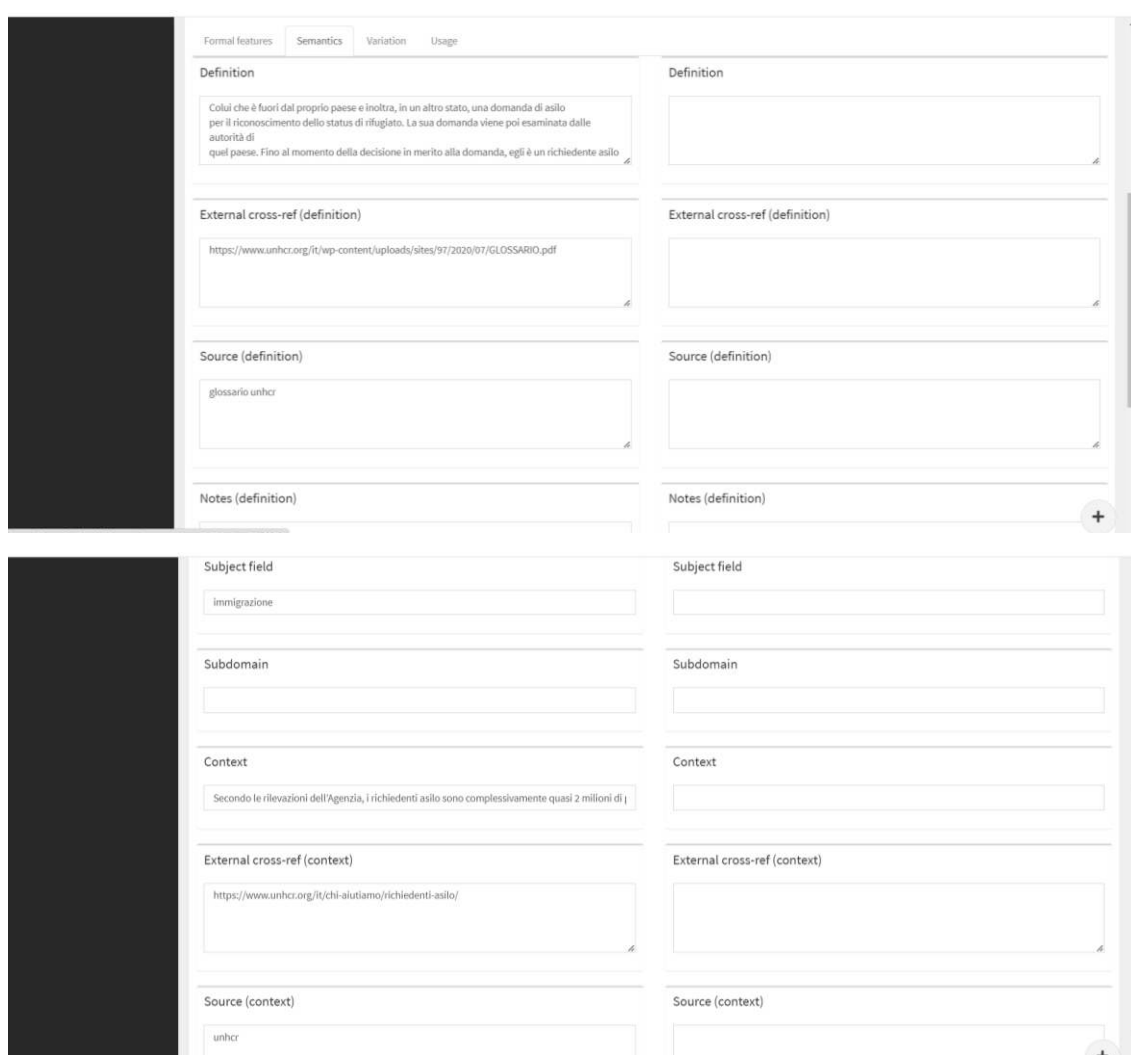


Figure 7: *Fairterm*: semantics of asylum seeker

Category	English	Italian
Definition	In the global context, a person who seeks protection from persecution or serious harm in a country other than their own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international	
External cross-ref (definition)	https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary_en	
Source (definition)	emn- asylum and migration glossary	
Synonym	asylum applicant	
Quasi-synonym		
Subject field	immigration	
Subdomain		
Context	However, during mass movements of refugees, usually as a result of conflict or violence, it is not	
External cross-ref (context)	https://www.unhcr.org/asylum-seekers.html	
Source (context)	unhcr	

It is clear that in order to find the definitions of the terms and their usage in context, both in English and Italian, I had to consult and read a wide number of documents. I was helped by the fact that I had already downloaded materials on migration contexts but sometimes I had to look for more specific documents. What was very helpful was the European Migration Network (EMN) website created by the EU council since here I could find not only documents but also glossaries both in Italian and English that I used to compile the terminological cards on *fairterm*.

The compilation of the terminological cards was a complex task for various reasons: first, as explained above, each single term needs to be described in detail in all its parts, making the procedure sometimes long, complex and mechanical. However, at the same time I had to pay attention to what I was writing since some terms were synonymous or pertained to more than one grammatical category (name, adjective, verb) depending on the context or they had orthographic variants and so on.

Second, there were terms that I had never heard or whose meaning was complex. In addition, sometimes I had difficulties in finding documents containing those terms. This shows the importance of possessing a background regarding specific topics of interest since if it is present, it allows a person not only to work easily and faster since he/she already knows the meaning of those terms, but also it gives him/her the competence to judge how helpful one document or website could be with respect to another.

Third, another difficulty I had was when I encountered to translate the terms from Italian to English, that is to say, find the equivalent terms in English. To do so, I had to widen my research in order to find more documents in English to compare to those in Italian and finally understand if the English term I found referred to the same concept as the Italian one or not. The problems I had were mainly caused by the differences between the Italian and English systems. To be precise the following terms gave me more difficulties: the Italian terms *questura*, *questore*, *prefettura*, *prefetto*; the terms related to the reception of migrants in the host country, which were many more and more precise in Italian than in English; *testo unico*. The research to find the best equivalents was not easy but made me reflect on the similarities and differences between the two systems of reference. The terms that gave me less translation problems were those specific terms most related to the migration context and known at EU and global level as: international protection, asylum seeker, crime against humanity and so on.

The following screenshot reports the terminological cards of one of the problematic terms: *testo unico*/consolidated text.

Figure 8: *Fairterm*: *testo unico* usage

Subject field	giurisprudenza	Subject field	
Subdomain		Subdomain	
Context	il presente testo unico, in attuazione dell'articolo 10, secondo comma, della Costituzione, si app	Context	
External cross-ref (context)	https://www.parlamento.it/parlam/leggi/deleghe/98286dl.htm	External cross-ref (context)	
Source (context)	parlamento italiano	Source (context)	

Figure 9: *Fairterm*: consolidated text usage

Categories

Formal features Semantics Variation Usage

Subject field	law	Subject field	
Subdomain		Subdomain	
Context	at the beginning of each consolidated text, the list of all acts affecting that consolidated text is d	Context	
External cross-ref (context)	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/collection/eu-law/consleg.html	External cross-ref (context)	

In addition, I had to work more for acronyms since I had difficulties finding the equivalent English acronym or because different acronyms were actually synonyms of the same term or the same acronym was accepted both in Italian and English. See the following examples as for the acronym SPRAR/PSASR:

Figure 10: *Fairterm*: PSASR variation

Figure 11: *Fairterm*: SPRAR variation

As for migrants in the health sector, no terms were uploaded on *fairterm*. I focused my attention on the dialogue “The kidney transplant” I had translated and then I prepared a specific glossary of the terms present in that specific dialogue.

Having finished the completion of the terminological cards both in English and Italian I had to download the lists in TSV or TBX format. Using Excel it was possible to read them. They were sent it to Serena Cecco who, after having checked my work, gave the lists to the students with the aim of helping them understanding what the working context was, that is to say, the migration context and the common needs and problems migrants have in host countries, and start learning some related terms.

To conclude, if on one hand the work using *fairterm* was complex at moments, sometimes challenging, on the other hand one can learn new terms, new words and, reading materials related to migrants, migration policies and migrant dynamics in the host country, and one's knowledge can be enlarged and enriched.

4.2 The dialogues: translation and recording

As explained in the introduction, the second step of the project consisted in: translating some parts of the three dialogues provided to me by Fiona Dalziel; preparing three specific glossaries containing the terms of the dialogues in question; finally, recording the dialogues with the help of teacher Serena Cecco and Samba Krubally, now living in Padova, who had the role of the migrant in the dialogues. The dialogues were produced by interpreter and cultural mediator Evelyn Nwaokenye.

The scripts of the dialogues were initially written in English and I had to translate only some parts into Italian. As for the dialogue “The student loan” I had to translate the part of the admissions officer; for the dialogue “The kidney transplant” I had to translate the part of the doctor and as regards the dialogue “The Court house” I had to translate the part of the judge. Before translating, I created the glossaries and, with the terminological cards, I started working in Italian, later in English. The glossaries were prepared in Word format, using a simple table made up of four columns containing: the English term in the first column, its definition and the source in the second column, the Italian term in the third column and its definition in the fourth column.

In order to prepare the glossaries I conducted to make some researches in order to consult websites and download documents and materials which could help me creating a background knowledge for the three topics in question. As for the dialogue “The student loan”, I mainly consulted Italian and English websites of: monolingual and bilingual dictionaries; universities; colleges and banks, in order to collect information on the functioning of students loan. The following figure shows a screenshot of the school glossary in order to have an idea of the layout.

Figure 12: English/Italian glossary of the school dialogue

Glossary			
TERM	DEFINITION	TERMINE	DEFINIZIONE
Examination session	<p>Different exam sessions are scheduled during the academic year and each course includes at least 4 different dates in which the related exam can be taken.</p> <p>The <u>organisation</u> of the exam sessions depends on the course scheduling (that is the semester or term the course will take place).</p> <p>Unive Exam session scheme</p> <p>https://www.unive.it/pag/20869/</p>	Sessione d'esame	<p>Nella maggior parte delle facoltà si hanno a disposizione 3 sessioni l'anno per dare gli esami: la sessione invernale tra gennaio e febbraio, la sessione estiva tra giugno e luglio e l'ultima sessione più breve a settembre.</p> <p>Ogni sessione d'esame dura circa un mese ed è suddivisa in più appelli, uno ogni 10 giorni. Se dovesse andare male il primo appello, ci si può ripresentare al secondo e sostenere nuovamente l'esame.</p> <p>ORIZZONTE SCUOLA</p>

The terms that gave me more problems were “scholarship board” because I had difficulties in finding a context of usage and a definition of it both in English and Italian; “admission letter” since consulting Italian universities websites I had difficulties in finding a context of usage while I did not consulting English university websites; “head of examination department” because, as for the previous term, I had some problems finding an Italian context of usage and an equivalent term. Fortunately, for the rest of the terms I did not have too many difficulties since the university context and the vocabulary related to it is familiar to me; in addition, I retrieved some information from glossaries I had prepared on the same topic during the liaison interpreting course I attended.

As for the dialogue “The kidney transplant” I consulted, in addition to monolingual and bilingual dictionaries in both languages, websites related to the topic of health and in particular transplant, cancer and documents on transplant procedure. The main sources of information were the Ministry of Health, health websites accredited by the government, national cancer institutes, Humanitas, *Fondazione Veronesi*. I have also consulted medical glossaries I found on the web. The following figure shows an example of the glossary I prepared.

Figure 13: English/Italian glossary of the health dialogue

<p>HLA typing</p>	<p>Human leukocyte antigen (HLA) testing is also called HLA typing or tissue typing. It is a blood test that identifies antigens on the surface of cells and tissues. It is used to match a transplant recipient (person receiving a transplant) with a compatible donor (person who gives their cells for a transplant). Canadian cancer society Human leukocyte antigen (HLA) testing</p> <p>https://cancer.ca/en/treatments/tests-and-procedures/human-leukocyte-antigen-hla-testing</p>	<p>Tipizzazione hla o tipizzazione tissutale</p>	<p>L'analisi delle molecole HLA (Human Leucocyte Antigen o antigeni HLA) di una persona viene detta "tipizzazione tissutale".</p> <p>REGIONE LOMBARDIA SISTEMA SOCIO SANITARIO ISTITUTO NAZIONALE TUMORI Rilevanza clinica degli antigeni HLA</p> <p>https://www.istitutotumori.mi.it/rilevanza-clinica-degli-antigeni-hla-s.c.-immunematologia-e-medicina-trasfusionale</p>
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The terms which gave me some problems were: “crossmatch test” because the Italian sources reported the term in English while I wanted to find an Italian term for it but I did not and “HLA typing” mainly because of the acronym and the fact that in Italian I did not find a satisfactory definition of the term as I did in English.

The context in question was personally not the most challenging from the lexical point of view but the most interesting from the topic point of view.

As for the dialogue “The Court house”, it was the most challenging mainly because of the terms related to the legal context. The main websites I consulted, in addition to English and Italian monolingual and bilingual dictionaries were: legal offices, government websites from which I could download directives and norms; legal articles; EMN website; legal website providing glossaries. Some of the terms were related to the migration context so I was helped by the fact that I had already prepared the terminology cards on that topic. The terms related most closely with the legal context which were difficult to me to translate were: “proceedings”, since I could not find a definition but only a context of usage in Italian; “legal counsel”, since I found different information in different websites which created confusion.

Figure 14: English/Italian glossary of the legal dialogue

Legal counsel	Legal counsel means any person qualified to give legal advice government of Canada https://www.justice.gc.ca/en/g/csj-sjc/harmonization/bijurilex/terminolog/not49.html	Consulente legale	Il consulente legale può fornire consigli, pareri e informazioni su questioni giuridiche ai suoi clienti. Una volta che gli viene sottoposta la problematica, il consulente studia la normativa relativa al caso e i precedenti giudiziari, per poi suggerire al cliente la soluzione migliore per tutelare i suoi interessi. <u>Laureaonline</u> giurisprudenza: come diventare consulente legale https://www.laureaonlinegiurisprudenza.it/come-diventare-consulente-legale/#:~:text=Il%20consulente%20legale%20pu%C3%B2%20fornire,per%20tutelare%20i%20suoi%20interessi.
Appeal	To ask a higher court to reverse the decision of a trial court after final judgment or other legal ruling	Ricorso	L'azione di ricorrere a un'autorità o a un magistrato per ottenere la tutela di un proprio diritto o interesse, o la revisione di giudizi e di decisioni

The dialogues had different lengths and different difficulties related to the vocabulary or the grammar in order to test students skills and competences. For example, the school dialogue was the shortest and easiest one as for vocabulary and grammar. On the contrary, the health and legal dialogues were more complex and longer. As for the translation of the dialogues, to be precise, the translation of some verbs and idiomatic expressions, I had some difficulties. In fact when Serena Cecco suggested that I should create a translation which was as natural and realistic the possible, considering the context of reference. These suggestions helped me finding a solution to my translation doubts.

While the scripts of the dialogues were not given to students at the beginning of the course, what students were provided with before watching the videos and doing the interpreting were: the glossaries and the abstracts of each dialogue. Receiving this material was to help them preparing useful background related to the school, legal and health sectors and to be better prepared for doing the interpreting tasks. The scripts of the dialogues were given only later and students could download them so as to check their ability in interpreting, the errors they made, the sentences they interpreted correctly; in other words, assess their performance.

When we started to record the dialogues, we realized that there was a gender incongruence between the scripts and the reality. To be precise, we had no problem for

the dialogue “The Court house” since the role of the asylum seeker named Ahmed was correctly interpreted by a man, Samba Krubally, the Gambian actor. However, as for the other two dialogues, the gender incongruence came out. In the medical dialogue, the scripts presented the name of Amanda, a migrant who had to donate her kidney to her cousin, while the actor we had was a man. Therefore, we decided to change the name of Amanda into Bakeka and correct all the feminine concordances and possessives adjectives in the scripts. In the school dialogue, the name of Aisha, the new student who applied for a student loan and needed an interpreter to talk with the admissions officer, was changed into Samba Krubally and on this occasion too every feminine concordance or reference was changed into the masculine.

The program we used to record the videos was the well-known Zoom application. In order to make the recording more credible, we downloaded three different types of background: a clinic, a courtroom and an office. As for the school dialogue, the role of the admission officer was interpreted in Italian by myself while the role of the student in English by Samba Krubally. As for the health dialogue, teacher Cecco interpreted in Italian the role of the doctor while Samba interpreted in English the role of the donor named Bakeka. In the legal dialogue, the role of the judge was interpreted in Italian by myself while Serena Cecco interpreted in Italian the part of the lawyer in charge of helping Ahmed to appeal against the judgment of the Ministry of Interiors and Samba Krubally who interpreted in English the role of the asylum seeker.

We started with the legal dialogue but before recording it we made an attempt to become familiar with: the camera, the video, the audio, the technical functions of Zoom, the context (which was new to me since it was the first time I recorded a dialogue), the turn taking with the other interlocutors. We undoubtedly faced some difficulties since, at the same time, we had to: look at the camera and simultaneously take a look at the scripts that we had not learn by heart; be as natural as possible, speak fluently and try to behave observing our roles. In addition, what I tried to do was to speak at the right speed, not too fast but not too slow and, in doing so, I was thinking about students and the fact that I did not want to create many difficulties by speaking fast. In addition, I tried to articulate words as well as possible in order to be clear enough.

As for the students and the difficulties they could encounter during the watching of the videos, I think they are: the speed of speech, the articulation of words, especially the parts interpreted by the migrant Samba Krubally who speaks a variety of English which students might not be familiar with. However, we could not know what exactly were the difficulties students faced until we read the results of the questionnaire.

To conclude, I think that this experience, which was innovative, was interesting, motivating, and stimulating. My anxiety and worries due to the new context of action were put to test and even if we faced some difficulties, the final work seemed good.

When the recordings were ready, they were been uploaded on the University website and made available to students to do their interpreting, possibly recording themselves in order to assess their performance once they had downloaded the scripts.

4.3 The questionnaire and analysis of results

As explained in the introduction to this chapter, once the liaison interpreting students, both attending and non-attending, had completed their interpreting practice through the video recording of the three dialogues provided, they filled in the questionnaire proposed. The aim of giving students a questionnaire on the project was to receive: some feedback on the materials they had used to practice their interpreting skills; some personal opinions about the strength and weak points of the materials proposed: some knowledge about which type of exercises students actually need to practice their skills, especially non-attending students; and what were the main challenges during the tasks.

The questionnaire was distributed on line via Google Forms, it was anonymous, and it took about 15 minutes to complete so as to allow students not to waste an excessive amount of time or cognitive resources. The questionnaire contained 13 questions related to three different areas of interest: some personal questions related to their background, some more general questions related to interpreting and finally some questions about their impressions on the materials used. They have also been given the possibility to write me an email if they had any doubt or need. See Appendix 1 for the full questionnaire.

As for the types of questions, they were mainly multiple choice questions and two final open questions. The multiple choice questions consisted of different types of questions such as, for example, questions with only one possible answer to choose. As we can see from the following figure students could choose one from four options.

Figure 15 : Multiple choice question from the questionnaire

4. As for your skills in English, what do you think your greatest weakness is at present?

Speaking

Listening

Writing

Reading

5. As for your skills in English, what do you think your greatest strength is at present?

Speaking

Listening

Writing

Reading

Another type of closed question used a Likert scale, like the one shown below in Figure 16. It is based on a scale, from 1 to 6, in which students had to choose, for example, the level of easiness or importance of the topic in question in order to answer.

Figure 16: Likert scale question from the questionnaire

6. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1=not at all important; 6= extremely important) how important is it to have practice materials for interpreting?

1 2 3 4 5 6

7. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1=not easy at all; 6= extremely easy) how easy is it to find useful practice materials for interpreting?

1 2 3 4 5 6

The last type was a multiple choice template, as shown in Figure 17, and consisted in the evaluation, on a scale from 1 to 6, of the level of difficulty of 8 features of the dialogues proposed.

Figure 17: Evaluation scale from the questionnaire

10. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1=not at all difficult; 6=extremely difficult) how difficult did you find the following in the English parts of the dialogues?

Griglia a scelta multipla

Righe		Colonne	
1. Grammar	X	<input type="radio"/> 1	X
2. Vocabulary	X	<input type="radio"/> 2	X
3. Idiomatic expressions	X	<input type="radio"/> 3	X
4. Sentence length	X	<input type="radio"/> 4	X
5. Sentence structure	X	<input type="radio"/> 5	X
6. Register	X	<input type="radio"/> 6	X
7. Speaker's pronunciation	X	<input type="radio"/> Aggiungi colonna	
8. Speaker's speed	X		

The two concluding questions were open and students had no constraints of length in answering.

Figure 18: Open questions from the questionnaire

12. Give your reason for your answer to Question 10 above.

Testo risposta lunga

13. Do you have any comments on the activities?
If you are a non-attending student, can you give some feedback on the self-study materials?

Testo risposta lunga

As for the results, only 11 attending students completed the questionnaire. Unfortunately, non-attending students did not fill in the questionnaire so I could not get any feedback from them nor about their needs as concerns practicing at home and what would be the best exercises for this type of student. It would have been interesting to receive their comments since nonattending students actually need different materials from the those who come to class, maybe more exercises or structured differently.

As for the level of English, being master degree's students, it is a C1 for the majority of them, as shown in the statistic below.

Figure 19: English level

2. What is your overall level of English at present?
16 risposte

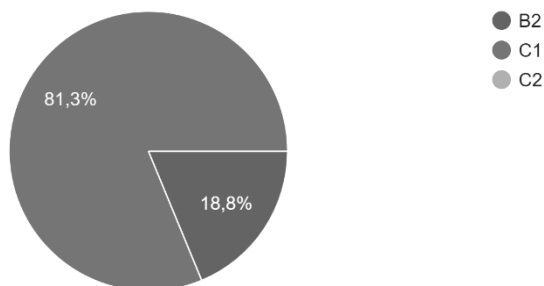
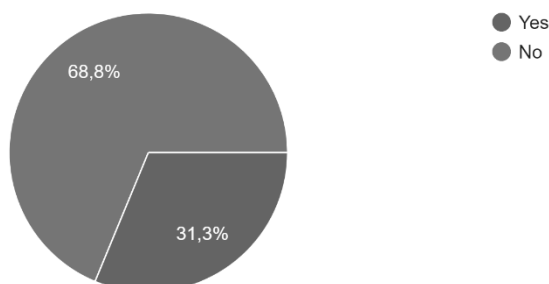


Figure 20 shows that only 18.2% had already attended an interpreting course while the 81.8% had not.

Figure 20: Previous experience

3. Had you ever attended an interpreting course before this one?
16 risposte



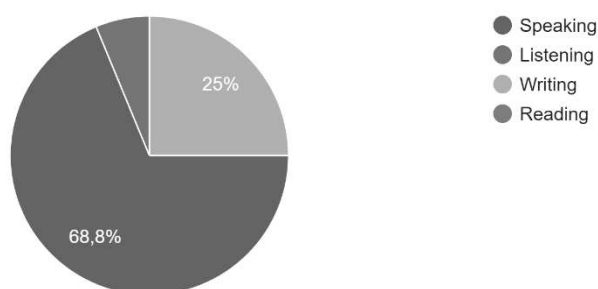
Of the four skills of a language, the speaking proved to be the weakest for the majority of students. Only 27.3% claimed that writing was their weakest skill. The fact students claimed that speaking was the greatest weakest for them may be the result of their awareness after having practiced the interpreting dialogues and as a consequence, their

realisation about the fact that speaking skills are the main skills that need to be developed by interpreters. As for listening and reading skills, nobody thought they were the greatest weaknesses.

Figure 21: Greatest weakness

4. As for your skills in English, what do you think your greatest weakness is at present?

16 risposte

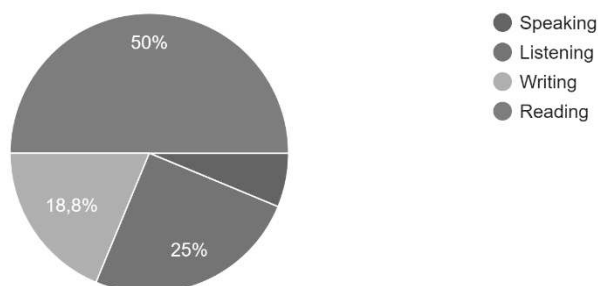


Reading skills, on the contrary, were considered the greatest strength by half of the students (54%), as we can see from the screenshot below, while about one third of the students thinks that listening is their greatest strength.

Figure 22: Greatest strength

5. As for your skills in English, what do you think your greatest strength is at present?

16 risposte



This answer may make one reflect how English as a second language is taught in Italy and which types of exercises are proposed to students. It seems that the focus of education

is the development of reading skills while speaking is left aside. On one hand, with reference to my personal experience as student and as an English teacher at primary school, I would argue that teachers tend still to focus on the development of reading and writing skills while speaking skills are often considered as secondary or not approached to such a great extent, maybe because they are more difficult to assess or because teachers do not find appropriate authentic material to work on. On the other hand, students sometimes consider the development of speaking skills as not so important or as something that does not need to be taught, perhaps something like a game to play. In addition, when speaking exercises to be done in pairs or groups are proposed, students may tend to speak Italian among themselves and speak English only when the teacher moves near them. The best way to help students to develop speaking skills and understand their importance and complexity could be by receiving extra conversation practice with a native/expert speaker teacher. In so doing, they can focus on pronunciation, improve their fluency and accuracy, learn new terms but also focus on listening skills.

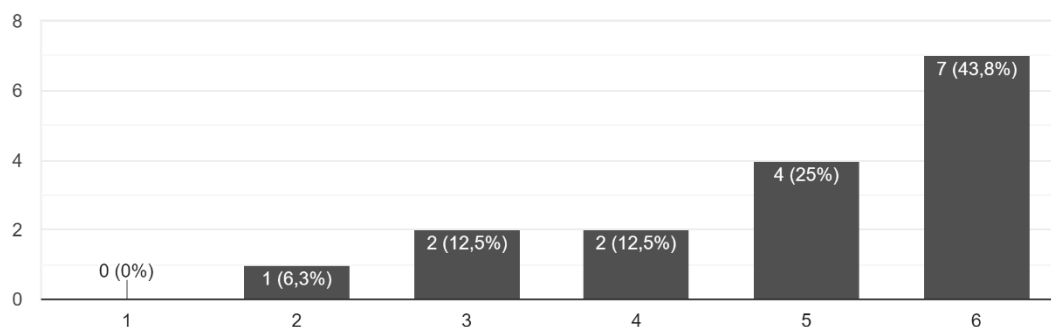
Moving from personal to more general questions on interpreting, the answers to question number 6 show how important it is to have materials to practice interpreting. On a scale from 1 to 6, 10 students answered that it is extremely important to practise interpreting skills through exercises. As for the ease of finding useful material to practice interpreting skills, about half of them agreed that it is not extremely easy or not easy at all. In fact, on a scale from 1 to 6, 45% chose a score of 3, while about nobody felt that finding useful material is extremely easy nor not easy at all.

Answers to question number 8 confirmed the importance, already explained in this chapter, for interpreting students to be trained by using video recording material and not just audio. The importance comes from the fact that the video helps students see speakers' behaviour, gestures, posture, movement, lip movement and facial expressions. All these elements make them aware of the relational context and atmosphere in which the interpreter works, in addition to the fact that video helps students catch some information that with just the audio they would have lost or misunderstood.

Figure 23: Usefulness of video recording

8. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1=not at all useful; 6= extremely useful) how useful it is to have a video recording instead of just the audio?

16 risposte

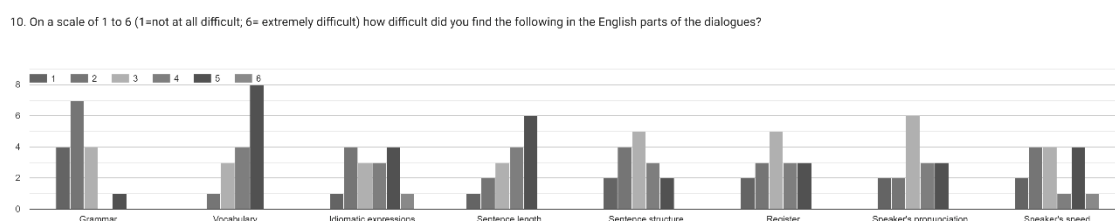


Answers to question number 9 confirmed another important issue already described previously in this chapter, namely the importance of working on glossaries before starting an interpreting exercise in order to create background knowledge about the specific topic in question. In fact, 72% answered that the glossaries provided for the activities of the present project were extremely helpful.

What was interesting were the answers given to question 10, namely, on a scale of difficulty from 1 to 6, evaluating the following 8 features of the parts in English of the dialogues provided: grammar, vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, sentence length, sentence structure, register, speaker's pronunciation, speaker's speed. As for grammar, 6 people answered that it was not so difficult and nobody valued this feature as extremely difficult or difficult (levels 4, 5 and 6 on the scale). As concerns the vocabulary, almost half of the students thought that it was difficult (level 5 on the scale), which explains the importance given to the glossaries in the previous question, and only one person considered the vocabulary not difficult at all. Moving on to idiomatic expressions, the answers were varied, since 3 people thought they were not so difficult, 3 people thought they were difficult and three people valued them as very difficult. This result could depend on the personal background of students, how much they read or listen to authentic material. The answers were also varied as regards the length of the sentences since 3 people chose medium difficulty (level 3 of the scale), 3 people assessed it as difficult and

3 people as very difficult. Concerning the structure of the sentence, half of the students picked medium difficulty while only 2 people considered it difficult; a medium level of difficulty was given by half of the students to register and to the speaker's pronunciation. As for the speaker's speed, 4 people assessed it as not so difficult, while 3 people viewed it as very difficult. The following Figure shows the statistics of the answers to question 10. The different colours are linked to the scale of difficulty (blue level 1 not difficult at all and light blue level 6 extremely difficult).

Figure 24: Difficulty of dialogues



Question number 11 referred to the most challenging dialogue students dealt with and the majority (72%) answered that it was the courtroom dialogue, while only about one third of the students (27%) considered the medical dialogue as the most challenging. I was very curious about this result and it confirmed what I thought, that is to say, the legal field is usually the most demanding mainly for vocabulary reasons (terms and verbs), and some typical formulae which are often unknown by students. In addition, if references to a different type of legal system from the Italian one is made, it is more difficult to search for the equivalents. It has already been said in the first chapter of this dissertation that, with respect to other fields of study, the legal one is the most strict in translation terms since the interpreter has to pay attention to the accurate rendition of speech. I agree with students as for the difficulty related to the legal area because it was challenging for me too during the preparation of the legal glossary and the translation of some parts of the dialogue.

It is interesting to understand the reasons that lie behind the answers given by students question number 12, which is an open question which only 6 students answered. Related to the legal dialogue and the reason why students considered it challenging there is the

answer given by one student in which he/she suggested that there are two main reasons why the legal dialogue was the most challenging: the topic itself and the presence of three speakers (the lawyer, the judge and Ahmed) instead of two (as with the other two dialogues proposed).

Three students answered that the vocabulary was difficult, especially the medical terms as stated by one of these students, while another of the three students answered that he/she has to look for the meaning of some terms in the dictionary or for some idiomatic expressions. Another person answered that the main difficulty was the length of the Italian sentences with respect to the English ones. Only one person claimed that the vocabulary was not the main problem since they had been given the glossary while the main difficulties were related to the speed of the speakers' speech, which caused the loss of some information, and the register, especially phrases and expression mostly used in the legal field. However, 5 students, in their answers to question number 12, explained their reasons for their answer to question number 11 and not to the number 10 as asked, that is to say, they explained why the legal dialogue was the most challenging one.

Finally, as for question number 13, only four people gave their comments and they are all positive. Students expressed the usefulness of the materials proposed, saying that one would need more. One suggested to balancing the length of the sentences between Italian and English (even if in the instructions it was said that students could stop the recording when the sentences were too long) and one student claimed that he/she feels more engaged in a real life situation while a video recording makes him/her forget some parts of the dialogue.

To conclude, regarding the whole project, it was a very interesting experience, challenging in some parts, but it gave me the chance to test my English language knowledge and interpreting abilities, in addition to the fact that I learnt new terms and procedures and how to work in team since there was a collaboration between three people, as mentioned above. As for the questionnaire, it showed how students perceive the importance of practicing through a wide range of materials and what are their main challenges in the English language and interpreting field. However, only a small number

of them filled the questionnaire and wrote their comments related to the exercises proposed, in addition to the fact that non-attending students did not give their answers at all. It would have been very interesting to gain some knowledge about their opinions and impressions, as related to the interpreting exercises.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the present dissertation has been written with the aim of first giving the reader a theoretical overview on interpreting in general in the first chapter, on liaison interpreting and the role of the liaison interpreter in the second chapter, and on the four basic language skills that an interpreter needs in order to perform his/her work in the third chapter. Then, there is a second, practical part, which consists in the description of a project aimed at helping liaison interpreting students to develop their skills. The project consisted of three steps: research conducted on migrant topics aimed at creating corpora in order to complete terminological lists in *fairterm*; the translation of the scripts of the dialogues from English to Italian together with the creation of glossaries containing the specific terms of the dialogues in question; the video recordings of the dialogues; the questionnaire containing questions addressed to students attending the liaison interpreting course, followed by the analysis of their answers and comments on the tasks they carried out and the usefulness of the materials proposed. The three dialogues concerned the migration context, and, in particular, school, health and the law.

It is necessary at this point, to answer to an important question which will allow us to understand the link between the first theoretical chapters and what emerged from the practical project: how is the theory related to the practice? In the theoretical part of this dissertation, summarising the different definitions given by scholars of interpreting, the latter has emerged as an activity performed by the interpreter who has to facilitate the communication between speakers of different languages, who may have very different cultural backgrounds. It has also been stated that he/she has to focus on the intended speaker meaning when interpreting, therefore giving importance to the intention of the speakers and not to the translation of each single word. In view of this general definition of interpreting and the role of the interpreter, the aim of the project was that of allowing students to practice their interpreting skills thanks to the three dialogues video recorded for them in which there were two different language speakers and in which each student would perform the role of the interpreter as the facilitator of communication. I do not know exactly how they performed their role of interpreters, for example, if they focused more on meaning than on the translation of each single word, since I did not see their

performance. What I can say is that the importance of focusing on meaning also arose in the part of the project where I worked on the translation of the dialogues themselves, and tried to produce as natural and realistic a translation as possible.

As for the skills an interpreter should possess, linguistic, cultural, communicative skills have been cited in the theoretical section of the thesis, in addition to all those skills which are necessary to manage the non-verbal elements related to the interpreting context. Mood, tone, gesture, facial expression and pragmatic variables have to be taken into account by an interpreter since they influence the meaning of the utterances to be interpreted. As for the skills needed to manage the non-verbal elements just cited, which are essential not only for interpreters in general but also for liaison interpreters, I can suppose that students have developed them by practicing through the use of the dialogues given to them. In fact, as emerged from answers to question n. 8 of the questionnaire, the provision of video recordings instead of only audio has been considered very useful in this sense, since students could see the speakers in the video in order to catch the non-verbal elements. However, one student commented that practising in this way, namely, using video recordings online, posed more difficulties than acting in a real situation in which he/she would have been physically involved in the interpreting performance.

Liaison interpreting has been described as a dynamic and interactive process, known as three way dialogue interpreting (Mack, 2005), in which the interpreter is directly involved in the interaction between the two speakers. The dialogic mode is used, and the liaison interpreter is physically present near his/her clients; he/she has to carry out his/her performance respecting turn taking. As for liaison interpreting, the project, and in particular the video recorded dialogues, have in fact included the alternation of turn taking between the two different language speakers, while the dialogic interaction between them and the interpreter is something that did not happen in presence but virtually, since students did the interpretation task on their own, stopping the video and interpreting the utterances.

In addition, in the theoretical part, it has been stated that the liaison interpreter often works in migration contexts in which service users, such as migrants or refugees, need his/her

help in order to access public services and communicate with the providers of these services. The typical liaison interpreting contexts which have been described in the theoretical part of the thesis are school, legal, medical, business, asylum contexts and other types of migrant contexts. This has been put into practice if we consider the typical liaison situations of the three dialogues proposed to students, which all relate to the migrant context and in particular to school (see the dialogue “The student loan”), to health (see the dialogue “The kidney transplant”) and to the law (see the dialogue “The Court House”). In all the dialogues, there was a migrant (namely the migrant student, the migrant donor of kidney and the asylum seeker) who needed the help of the interpreter (the students taking part in the present project) in order to communicate with a service provider (the admissions officer, the doctor and the judge).

As concerns the skills that a liaison interpreter should possess, not only linguistic, communicative and cultural but also, because of the contexts in which he/she works and because of the clients he/she works for, social, empathic, non-verbal and pragmatic skills are crucial. As for non-verbal and pragmatic skills, they have already been explained above. As for social and empathic skills, it was almost impossible to develop them in relation to the present project since the interpreter was not physically near the speakers and linguistic skills were actually the main skills developed and practised in this project. As for the possession of cultural skills, it has to be said that students did not actually conduct research related to the specific cultural background of the two speakers taking part in the dialogues.

As for linguistic skills, in addition to the knowledge of the two working languages involved in this project, namely Italian and English, which undoubtedly have been put into practice by students when performing their role of interpreters, the following linguistic elements have been object of the questionnaire: vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, sentence length, idiomatic expressions, register, speaker’s pronunciation and speaker’s speed. They have been put undoubtedly into practice by students when practicing their role of interpreter and they have also been object of question n. 10 in the questionnaire. To be precise, students through their answers, on the basis of a scale of difficulty from 1 to 6, had to value these linguistic elements. Some students considered

terminology as the main difficulty in the dialogues (especially legal and medical dialogues), others the length of the sentences, and others the speed of pronunciation and idiomatic expressions. All these are typical difficulties that an interpreter could face and only practicing can help students improve them.

In addition, as we have seen in the chapter on the language skills, active listening skills (namely, focusing the listening attention on meaningful units) and speaking skills are crucial for interpreters, rather than reading and writing. It can be said that, given the type of task they had to do, students undoubtedly practiced their speaking and listening skills. As for the speaking skills, the answers of students in the questionnaire revealed that they represent their great weakness and therefore practicing emerges as an important element to consider for the training of interpreting students. To be precise, as emerged from the answers to the questionnaire, the speaker's speed, pronunciation and the variety of English spoken by the migrant actor involved in the dialogues posed some difficulties. We can see again how important it is for an interpreter to practise because it allows him/her to become more familiar with different speeds of speech, different pronunciations, different varieties of English, different registers and tone of voice.

In the theoretical chapters we have seen that for a liaison interpreter but also for an interpreter in general, the preparatory phase is essential in order to create a general background about the contexts in which the interpreting performance will take place. As for the present project, the preparation phase consisted in the research I conducted on migration topics in order to create corpora, collect the terminology for the terminology cards compiled in *fairterm* and create the glossaries related to the three specific topics of the dialogues involved, namely school, health and the law. All this was helpful for students for the creation of their background knowledge on typical migration topics, in addition to the research they conducted in the preparatory phase before practicing.

Finally, as stated by Albl Mikasa (2013), the competence of an interpreter comes from practice, so it comes from learning by doing, and it is the result of an initial formal phase which takes place at school, followed by a more informal phase which takes place in the working context and gives the interpreter growing confidence and awareness of his/her

strengths and weaknesses. In this sense, the project and the questionnaire results showed that for students of liaison interpreting, practice and training through different materials is essential and useful in order to enhance their interpreting skills. In addition, it seems that this project, which aimed at helping students in their liaison interpreting training, confirms Albl Mikasa's (2013) ideas about liaison interpreting. To be precise, the project showed that formal education and training at school are needed for the development of the competence of a liaison interpreter, in addition to the fact that the existence of a university liaison interpreting course confirms the role of the liaison interpreter as a professional figure.

This last statement contrasts with the idea, expressed in the theoretical part of this thesis, of the liaison interpreter as a traditionally non-professional and untrained figure (Pochhacker, 2008). If this was true only initially, this project, in contrast, shows that university liaison interpreting courses exist and, as emerged from the questionnaire, that practicing through ad hoc materials is not only useful but crucial for students in order to enhance their liaison interpreting competence and make them aware of their strengths and weaknesses in the interpreting field. In other words, the liaison interpreter becomes a professional if he/she knows both theory and interpreting techniques (Mack, 2005). Liaison interpreting is a young profession which is gradually taking its rightful place in the field of interpreting. Despite the existence of a growing number of liaison interpreting courses there is still a lack of descriptive studies about the teaching and learning of this complex mode of interpreting (Maximous, 2017).

APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERPRETING COURSE STUDENTS

1. Are you an attending or non-attending student?
2. What is your level of English at present (e.g. B2, C1, C2)?
3. Had you ever attended an interpreting course before this one?
4. As for skills in English, what do you think your greatest weakness is?
 - Speaking
 - Listening
 - Writing
 - Reading
 - other (specify)
5. As for skills in English, what do you think your greatest strength is?
 - Speaking
 - Listening
 - Writing
 - Reading
 - other (specify)
6. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1= ...)
 - How important are practice materials for interpreting?
7. On a scale of 1 to 6
 - How easy is it to find practice materials for interpreting?
8. On a scale of 1 to 6
 - How useful it is to have a video recording instead of just the audio?
9. On a scale of 1 to 6
 - How helpful were the glossaries provided for these activities?
10. On a scale of 1 to 6 how difficult did you find the following? (1 = ...)
 - the grammar
 - the vocabulary
 - the idiomatic expressions
 - the length of the sentences
 - the structure of the sentences

-the register

-the pronunciation of the speaker

-the speed of the speaker

-other (specify)

11. Which dialogue was the most challenging one?

-Dialogue one (Courtroom)

-Dialogue 2 (Hospital)

-Dialogue 3 (Admissions Office)

12. Give your reason for the answer 10 above

13. Do you have any comments on the activities? If you are a non-attending student, can you give some feedback about the self-study materials?

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SUMMARY

L'interpretariato è un'attività antichissima, che permette a due persone che parlano lingue diverse e che provengono da paesi e culture diverse di comunicare. La comunicazione è facilitata dalla figura dell'interprete, che rappresenta il fulcro di questo complesso processo. Il suo ruolo è quello fare in modo che le due persone si capiscano e questo obiettivo può essere raggiunto solo grazie alle abilità e competenze dell'interprete. Quest'ultimo deve quindi possedere diverse abilità tra cui: abilità linguistiche (conoscere molto bene la lingua di partenza e la lingua di arrivo); abilità culturali (conoscere le culture dei due paesi coinvolti nel processo interpretativo); abilità comunicative (fare in modo che la comunicazione tra i due interlocutori abbia successo); competenze sociali (saper interagire con le persone con cui ha a che fare durante la sua performance); abilità pragmatiche (saper cogliere tutti quegli aspetti contestuali che influenzano fortemente il significato di un messaggio verbale); abilità non-verbali (saper cogliere il significato nascosto nella postura, gestualità, espressione fisica e facciale, mood, e tanti altri aspetti non-legati alla parola ma ricchi di significato).

Esistono diversi modi di interpretariato, tra cui: interpretariato consecutivo (CI), interpretariato simultaneo (SI), traduzione a vista, chuchotage e interpretariato di trattativa, conosciuto anche come interpretariato dialogico, ad-hoc, di comunità, liaison interpreting. Quest'ultimo, definito come recente modalità di interpretariato, meno studiata e discussa rispetto alle altre modalità, sarà oggetto di analisi nella presente tesi, in cui vedremo come esista una complessità di fondo legata a problemi terminologici nella definizione di liaison interpreting. In generale, il liaison interpreting è un tipo di interpretariato in cui ancora la figura centrale è quella dell'interprete che, a differenza del consecutive o simultaneous interpreting, interagisce nel dialogo con i due interlocutori parlanti lingue diverse in un vero e proprio "three way dialogue interpreting" (Mack, 2005) in cui esercita in duplice direzione linguistica (da lingua A a lingua B e viceversa). L'interprete di trattativa parla in prima persona ed è fisicamente vicino ai suoi clienti ed opera in contesti tipicamente legati all'ambito migratorio, in cui si occupa di facilitare la comunicazione tra utenti (migranti) e fornitori di servizi pubblici. Questi ambiti vanno dalla scuola, alla sanità, alla pubblica amministrazione, a contesti di asilo, prefetture,

questure, contesti legali, e così via. Anche l'interprete di trattativa deve possedere abilità linguistiche, comunicative, culturali, pragmatiche, ma soprattutto sociali ed empatiche, essendo i clienti migranti per cui lavora bisognosi non solo di un aiuto dal punto di vista linguistico ma anche emotivo e sociale.

Se dal punto di vista teorico, lo scopo della presente tesi è quello di dare al lettore una visione generale sull'interpretariato, seguita da un focus sulle varie modalità di interpretariato e la figura dell'interprete ma soprattutto sul liaison interpreting e il liaison interpreter, dal punto di vista pratico lo scopo è quello di mostrare, attraverso un progetto che descriverò in seguito, come gli studenti di liaison interpreting abbiano bisogno di materiale utile su cui esercitarsi durante il loro training per sviluppare le loro abilità interpretative e allenare ed acquisire le 4 principali abilità del linguaggio, in primis l'ascolto e il parlato, seguiti dalla scrittura e la lettura. In conclusione, verranno discusse le risposte date al questionario sottoposto agli studenti aderenti al progetto sull'utilità del materiale proposto per l'allenamento delle abilità di interpretariato.

La presente tesi è composta da 4 capitoli, di cui i primi tre principalmente teorici seguiti dall'ultimo capitolo che si focalizza sul progetto in questione e l'analisi del questionario. Nel primo capitolo viene fornita una visione generale sull'interpretariato e la figura dell'interprete; nel secondo c'è la descrizione del liaison interpreting e le abilità del liaison interpreter; nel terzo vengono descritte le 4 abilità del linguaggio, con riferimenti pratici al presente progetto e nel quarto, il capitolo pratico, vengono analizzate tutte le fasi del progetto.

Il primo capitolo, il più generico, passa in rassegna una serie di definizioni date da diversi studiosi sul termine "interpretariato", oltre che un'analisi delle varie entrate presenti in diversi dizionari monolingue del verbo "interpretare", sottolineando similitudini e differenze a riguardo, sia nella definizione del verbo che del sostantivo. Riassumendo ciò che emerge dalla suddetta analisi, sia dei dizionari che degli studiosi, l'interpretariato risulta essere un'attività orale, che si svolge in un certo luogo e in un certo tempo, in cui l'interprete che risulta essere la figura centrale, si occupa di fare in modo che due parlanti di lingue diverse comunichino e si capiscano, sottolineando l'importanza del trasmettere

il significato del messaggio da parte dell'interprete. Il processo così descritto sembra essere dinamico e complesso, visto che l'interprete deve non solo comprendere il messaggio dell'interlocutore di partenza, ma processarlo, rielaborarlo, e trasmetterlo all'interlocutore di arrivo. L'interprete quindi deve catturare l'intenzione comunicativa dell'interlocutore di partenza, che è influenzata dalle variabili contestuali, e trasmetterla all'interlocutore di arrivo, mantenendo la stessa funzione informativa e lo stesso valore socioculturale di partenza. Il tutto oralmente e contestualmente all'atto comunicativo, il che provoca un certo stress e ansia dovuta alla mancanza di tempo per riflettere. Questo implica che l'interprete debba possedere abilità sia linguistiche che extralinguistiche e di gestione dello stress.

Tra i vari modi di interpretariato, si possono fare diverse classificazioni in base a diversi criteri: considerando il contesto, esistono modalità di interpretariato di conferenza e di non-conferenza in cui vengono usate diverse tecniche. La prima è quella simultanea, in cui l'interprete, da una cabina, deve trasmettere il messaggio in lingua di arrivo simultaneamente all'emissione del messaggio in lingua di partenza. La difficoltà è proprio questa, in assenza di tempo per riflettere o prendere note. All'interno del SI rientra la traduzione a vista, che consiste nel tradurre oralmente in tempo reale un testo da una lingua di partenza a una di arrivo. Il secondo modo e il più antico è il consecutive interpreting che, a differenza del SI, permette all'interprete di prendere note e di lavorare in una alternanza di turni, in cui si aspetta che l'interlocutore iniziale finisca di emettere il messaggio per poi interpretarlo in lingua di arrivo e così via. Entrambi i modi si usano nelle conferenze. In terzo modo è il chuchotage o interpretariato sussurrato che ha tutte le caratteristiche di quello simultaneo tranne che l'interprete deve sussurrare il messaggio all'orecchio dell'interlocutore di arrivo. L'ultima modalità è il dialogue interpreting, tecnica usata in contesti di comunità, caratterizzata da interattività e dinamicità nell'alternanza dei turni tra gli interlocutori e l'interprete, che lavora in duplice senso linguistico e si trova in prossimità fisica ai suoi interlocutori.

Tra le varie abilità che deve avere l'interprete, come detto in precedenza, quelle linguistiche, culturali, comunicative, sociali, extralinguistiche, ma anche possedere una buona memoria, una buona gestione dello stress, la capacità di parlare in pubblico, di

prendere decisioni in poco tempo, buone abilità di ascolto attivo, conoscenza delle strategie di facilitazione del processo interpretativo. Tutte le varie abilità possedute dall'interprete compongono la sua competenza e quindi ne fanno un interprete professionista. Come sostiene Albl Mikasa (2013), la competenza è qualcosa che va creata e coltivata gradualmente e nel tempo, a partire dalla formazione scolastica alla successiva pratica in ambito lavorativo, la quale permette all'interprete di imparare facendo, prendere consapevolezza e confidenza nel campo. Tra le abilità che l'interprete professionista possiede, c'è anche quella pragmatica e cioè la capacità di comprendere non solo e semplicemente il significato delle parole da interpretare ma anche ciò che l'interlocutore intendeva dire o fare attraverso quelle parole (the intended speaker's meaning). La teoria degli atti linguistici di Austin (1963) sostiene che le espressioni linguistiche costituiscano delle azioni e che a seconda del contesto in cui viene emesso il messaggio dall'interlocutore, diversi atti linguistici possano avere luogo. La capacità dell'interprete sta proprio nel saper cogliere il significato di un messaggio emesso in un certo contesto e caratterizzato da una certa serie di variabili (contestuali, culturali) e saperlo trasmettere nel rispetto della funzione comunicativa di partenza. Una delle sfide a cui deve far fronte il liaison interpreter è quella di mettere in atto le strategie linguistiche di cortesia per minimizzare le minacce alla faccia, positiva o negativa, degli interlocutori e poterla proteggere.

Infine il primo capitolo si chiude con una comparazione tra interpretariato e traduzione, analizzando similitudini e differenze. Attraverso un'analisi di definizioni date da diversi studiosi ai concetti di "traduzione", emerge una prima differenza legata al mezzo di trasmissione del messaggio, orale per l'interpretariato e scritto per la traduzione. Un'ulteriore differenza sta nel fatto che mentre con l'interpretariato spesso manca il tempo di riflessione, essendo il messaggio volatile, vale il contrario per la traduzione, essendo il messaggio scritto. Per quanto riguarda le similitudini, in entrambi i casi l'attività consiste nel tradurre, oralmente o per iscritto, un messaggio, di cui né interprete né traduttore sono gli autori e che quindi può essere inteso diversamente da come lo intendeva l'autore di partenza. Entrambe le attività sono di rielaborazione del messaggio, espresso in una lingua di partenza che è diversa da quella di arrivo e che quindi implica una buona conoscenza da parte di entrambi i professionisti. Si può quindi dire che le due

attività siano legate e che i due professionisti condividano alcune abilità piuttosto che altre specifiche del campo interpretativo o traduttologico.

Il secondo capitolo prende in esame la modalità di interpretariato di trattativa, conosciuto anche come *liaison interpreting*, proponendone una descrizione seguita da un focus sul ruolo e le abilità dell'interprete di trattativa e sui contesti in cui principalmente opera. Viene analizzato anche il complesso e, talvolta poco chiaro, legame tra interpretariato di trattativa e mediazione culturale. L'interprete di trattativa viene definito essere spesso e tradizionalmente un interprete ad hoc e che non ha avuto una formazione scolastica di interpretariato, che spesso ma non sempre rappresenta i parlanti la lingua minoritaria poiché anche lui proviene dagli stessi paesi, lavora in vari contesti di servizio pubblico ed utilizza la tecnica dialogica. Condivide con l'interprete di conferenza alcune caratteristiche e abilità ma a differenza del suddetto lavora in contesti più informali in cui partecipa e interagisce attivamente con i suoi interlocutori, lavorando faccia a faccia con loro ed essendo, più dell'interprete di conferenza, coinvolto psicologicamente ed emotivamente. Deve essere empatico, non invisibile ma imparziale, creare un'atmosfera di lavoro rilassata e di fiducia, essere un buon ascoltatore e ben concentrato. Un'altra caratteristica tipica del contesto in cui avviene il *liaison interpreting* è la presenza di una relazione di potere sbilanciata tra il fornitore di servizi e l'utente (Cho, 2022) che va bilanciata dall'interprete di trattativa il quale ha quindi un ruolo molto importante di agente sociale, poiché nella sua performance si occupa di dare diritti e poteri alle minoranze per cui lavora. Questa asimmetria è più forte in contesti come quello legale e medico, meno in quello scolastico e commerciale.

Date le caratteristiche dell'interprete di trattativa e del contesto in cui lavora, sembrerebbe che esista una relazione tra questa figura e quella del mediatore culturale, andando in certi casi a sovrapporsi quasi esattamente. Tralasciando la complessa questione terminologica legata all'uso dei diversi sinonimi e ai diversi significati che assume la figura del mediatore in base alla geografia (paesi diversi fanno riferimento alla stessa figura usando terminologie diverse), sembrerebbe, sulla base di documenti deontologici, che le due figure condividano la parte più sociale ed emotiva del loro lavoro, le competenze

linguistiche e culturali, i principi etici di confidenzialità ed imparzialità mentre la advocacy risulta essere presente nella figura del mediatore interculturale.

Come precedentemente detto, i contesti di lavoro principali in cui opera l'interprete di trattativa sono quello commerciale, scolastico, medico e legale. Nell'ambito commerciale, in cui compratori e venditori provenienti da paesi diversi devono comunicare, l'interprete di trattativa deve gestire al meglio lo scambio di informazioni tra i due interlocutori cercando di far raggiungere il migliore accordo tra i due, agendo in modo ben visibile e da coordinatore. In questo ambito l'asimmetria di poteri è meno presente ma l'interprete deve comunque far fronte e gestire tipici comportamenti di sfida e ironici che vanno ad influenzare il significato dei messaggi da interpretare. Nell'ambito medico, in cui l'asimmetria è più presente, l'interprete di trattativa si occupa di facilitare la comunicazione paziente-dottore cercando di mantenere imparzialità, creare fiducia, un ambiente empatico, e soprattutto dare giustizia e potere al cliente minoritario, che vive spesso condizioni emotivamente pesanti e ha bisogno di una persona che lo capisca, sia dal punto di vista linguistico che psicologico, e questa persona è il liaison interpreter. In ambito scolastico l'interprete di trattativa si occupa di mediare dialoghi genitori-insegnanti in cui spesso i genitori immigrati si sentono far parte di una comunità di esclusi dalla vita scolastica e dalle varie iniziative prese in questo ambito e quindi a partire da questa loro sensazione l'interprete deve cercare di creare un ambiente di dialogo il più rilassato, comprensivo possibile. L'ambito legale risulta quello in cui l'asimmetria di potere è maggiore e quello in cui ci sono più regole da rispettare anche per l'interprete. L'ideologia predominante è quella del giudice, che ha sempre l'ultima decisione, mentre l'interprete e il suo cliente vengono considerati come elementi secondari. L'interprete in tutti questi ambiti di lavoro si trova spesso di fronte al dilemma di dover essere neutrale ed imparziale da un lato ma emotivamente influenzato dal bisogno di aiuto del migrante. Una collaborazione maggiore tra figure legali e interpreti sarebbe auspicabile.

Il terzo capitolo ha lo scopo di descrivere le 4 abilità fondamentali del linguaggio, cioè l'ascolto e il parlato, la lettura e la scrittura, che un interprete deve acquisire durante il percorso educativo e possedere per poter svolgere il proprio lavoro. Viene fatto anche riferimento all'importanza dell'insegnamento di una lingua non come fine ma come

mezzo per raggiungere lo scopo della comunicazione e all'importanza dell'insegnamento delle varie abilità linguistiche in maniera integrata e non separata, il che permetterebbe un raggiungimento migliore dello scopo comunicativo. Il parlato è l'abilità principale per un interprete e definita, insieme allo scritto, come un'abilità produttiva, rispetto all'ascolto e alla lettura definite come abilità passive o recettive. Tra le varie attività proposte per sviluppare le abilità di speaking in generale, il role play, discussioni di coppia o di gruppo e simulazioni sono le migliori perché permettono agli studenti di interagire e parlare il più possibile. Il punto di partenza deve essere un tema interessante o a loro vicino, e l'insegnante deve rappresentare una figura non intrusiva ma che ascolta, annota punti di forza e di debolezza emersi durante un esercizio, e alla fine dà agli studenti dei feedback che diventano poi a loro volta motivo di discussione. Un esempio di role play in ambito interpretativo è quello presente nel progetto poiché propone agli studenti di agire in veste di interpreti in tre dialoghi ambientati in contesti tipicamente di interpretariato di trattativa. I vari esercizi per sviluppare le abilità di parlato vanno sempre proposti con gradualità e potrebbero includere discussioni a partire da letture di articoli o documentazione di attualità, ma per studenti di liaison interpreting il migliore è esercitarsi nell'interpretare tipici dialoghi di trattativa sulla base di copioni forniti dall'insegnante, come quello che viene proposto nel presente progetto. Nell'allenarsi per acquisire le abilità di parlato, lo studente, non solo di liaison interpreting, dovrà far fronte a diverse difficoltà tra cui l'abilità di parlare in pubblico, l'organizzazione delle idee, scegliere il giusto registro, modulare il tono di voce, essere fluente ed accurato, utilizzare il giusto vocabolario, essere sicuro di sé. Dovrà inoltre saper gestire tutti gli elementi non verbali che influenzano il messaggio che coinvolge lingue e culture diverse e quindi implica la conoscenza di diverse espressioni idiomatiche e il riconoscimento di diverse varietà dialettali.

Legate alle abilità di parlato ci sono le abilità di ascolto che possono essere acquisite durante il training dagli studenti a cui viene proposto l'ascolto di audio autentici o anche la visione di dialoghi autentici, di vita reale. Utile soprattutto per gli studenti di interpretariato di trattativa l'ascolto di situazioni reali o fittizie di interpretariato. Come suggerito da ORCIT, l'interprete deve essere un ascoltatore attivo che si concentra sugli elementi che contengono il significato principale e cerca di mantenere una certa

concentrazione e calma, evitando distrazioni e preparandosi sull'argomento in questione, anche creando un glossario dei termini coinvolti. ORCIT propone una serie di esercizi on line per sviluppare le abilità di ascolto, dimostrando come siano collegate a quelle di scrittura e di parlato. La memoria è coinvolta nell'ascolto e va allenata, soprattutto per gli interpreti di trattativa i quali non prendono solitamente nota durante la loro performance. Tra le difficoltà di ascolto a cui fa fronte un interprete, vengono nominate la velocità di parlata, la pronuncia, il tono di voce, la difficoltà nel capire numeri, date e acronimi, i dialetti, ma un interprete deve anche far attenzione all'intonazione, le pause, il vocabolario usato, il mood, l'ironia e ai fattori contestuali non-verbali.

Per quanto riguarda le abilità di lettura e scrittura, queste emergono come secondarie per un interprete di trattativa ma comunque importanti. Riguardo la scrittura, il note-taking viene menzionato come attività svolta soprattutto nell'interpretazione consecutiva con lo scopo di aiutare l'interprete nella performance. Durante l'ascolto, l'interprete annota attraverso l'uso di una simbologia specifica le parti essenziali e ciò lo aiuterà nel memorizzare il messaggio da interpretare. Per quanto riguarda le abilità di lettura in ambito interpretativo, queste si possono allenare attraverso: l'esercizio della traduzione a vista; la lettura e traduzione di copioni di dialoghi forniti dall'insegnante; la lettura di documentazione utile a creare una conoscenza di base su un certo argomento che sarà poi quello dei dialoghi da interpretare. Con riferimento al presente progetto, la lettura è stata sviluppata nella parte preparatoria, quando sia io che gli studenti abbiamo fatto ricerche e letto materiale in ambito migranti ed è servito per creare una visione generale ma anche acquisire la terminologia fondamentale utile per proseguire poi con l'interpretazione dei tre dialoghi proposti. Tra le varie difficoltà a cui fa fronte uno studente durante il training, viene ricordata la difficoltà di comprensione del contenuto dovuta a termini sconosciuti o a strutture sintattiche e grammaticali complesse. Grazie alla lettura però uno studente può acquisire nuovo vocabolario, nuovi contenuti e nuove sub-skills, oltre all'abilità di riassumere e pensiero critico.

Il quarto capitolo rappresenta la parte pratica della tesi poiché riporta la descrizione del progetto condotto in collaborazione con Serena Cecco, Fiona Dalziel e Samba Krubally. Il progetto è composto da tre parti: una preparatoria, una pratica e centrale e una finale di

raccolta di dati. I contesti in questione sono tipicamente di interpretazione di trattativa, legati alla migrazione e ai migranti. Dei tre dialoghi da interpretare proposti, uno è legato all'ambito scolastico, un altro all'ambito medico e ancora a quello legale. Lo scopo del progetto è aiutare gli studenti di liaison interpreting fornendo materiale utile per allenare le loro abilità di interpretariato e usufruibile in ogni momento poiché caricato online. La prima fase del progetto è una fase di ricerca, che ho condotto in modo tale da creare dei corpora, sia in inglese che in italiano, riguardanti il contesto migratorio, e soprattutto la ricerca di protezione internazionale, le richieste di asilo, la richiesta di cittadinanza, i migranti a scuola e altre questioni del genere. Ho consultato diversi siti tra cui il MIUR, l'UNHCR, l'OIM, la UE, siti di questure e prefetture e altri siti in cui ho potuto leggere e scaricare vari documenti, report, normative, articoli ecc. Lo scopo di questa ricerca è quella di selezionare la terminologia specifica del contesto di interesse e poter poi completare le schede terminologiche su *fairterm*. Per fare questo ho utilizzato il programma *sketchengine* che mi ha permesso di estrarre le parole chiave dai testi che ho raccolto e poter poi caricarle su *fairterm*. Ogni termine, prima in italiano e poi in inglese, è stato analizzato nelle sue categorie: formali, di semantica, di variazione e di uso. Durante la procedura descritta ho incontrato diverse difficoltà ma una volta terminata ho inviato il tutto a Serena Cecco che ha fornito la lista di termini agli studenti i quali hanno potuto crearsi una conoscenza di base del contesto migratorio.

Lo step successivo è stata la traduzione dall'inglese all'italiano di alcune parti dei copioni dei dialoghi forniti da Fiona Dalziel, seguita dalla creazione di tre glossari specifici per ogni dialogo e infine la video registrazione dei dialoghi interpretati da me, Serena Cecco e Samba. Per prima cosa ho preparato i glossari in ambito scolastico, medico e legale dei termini contenuti rispettivamente nei dialoghi “ The student loan”, “The kidney transplant” e “The Court House”. Ho creato una tabella italiano/inglese contenente i termini e le loro definizioni e la fonte. Ho poi tradotto le parti relative a “the admissions officer”, “the doctor” and “the judge” ma i copioni dei dialoghi non sono stati forniti agli studenti mentre i glossari sì.

Siamo poi passati alla videoregistrazione dei dialoghi utilizzando l'applicazione Zoom e, una volta conclusa, i video dei dialoghi sono stati caricati online e messi a disposizione degli studenti per potersi esercitare nel ruolo di interprete.

L'ultimo step è stato il completamento di un breve questionario anonimo da parte degli studenti di liaison interpreting per valutare l'esperienza e l'utilità del materiale proposto del esercitarsi. Il questionario è composto da 13 domande, tra cui alcune personali, altre sull'interpretariato in generale e altre sul materiale usato. La tipologia di domande era principalmente a scelta multipla e 2 domande aperte. Dall'analisi delle risposte è emerso come tutti gli studenti fossero frequentanti, avessero un buon livello di conoscenza della lingua inglese, e non avessero mai frequentato un corso di liaison interpreting. Tra le abilità in cui si sentono più deboli c'è lo speaking mentre si sentono più forti nel reading. Molta importanza viene data all'esercitarsi nelle abilità di interpretariato tramite diversi materiali così come all'esercitarsi grazie ad una video registrazione e non solo ad un file audio, poiché permette di catturare anche tutte quelle informazioni contestuali e non verbali descritte sopra. Tra gli elementi linguistici che hanno creato maggiori difficoltà, considerando vocabolario, grammatica, lunghezza delle frasi, velocità di pronuncia e pronuncia, il vocabolario è emerso come difficoltà principale, ma anche la lunghezza di alcune frasi e la pronuncia dell'attore gambiano Samba, oltre che l'alternanza dei turni nel dialogo. Tra i dialoghi proposti, quello giuridico è stato il più complesso e difficile per gli studenti che hanno comunque valutato in modo positivo l'esperienza e il materiale proposto.

Per concludere, la realizzazione del presente progetto ha permesso di essere non solo di aiuto agli studenti che vogliono avere del materiale aggiuntivo per esercitarsi ma anche, grazie al questionario che è stato loro sottoposto, di aiuto a me stessa in quanto i feedback raccolti hanno dimostrato la necessità e l'importanza di fare esercizio per sviluppare le abilità di interpretariato. Di conseguenza il task che hanno dovuto eseguire ha sicuramente permesso loro di testare in prima persona cosa vuol dire essere interprete, mettendo in campo tutte le abilità che dovrebbe possedere un interprete di trattativa e affrontando sicuramente alcune difficoltà. Come detto in precedenza, il modo migliore per acquisire consapevolezza e sicurezza è quello di fare pratica grazie a del materiale

autentico o fittizio ma che sia contestualizzato in quelli che sono gli ambiti tipici del liaison interpreting, attività relativamente recente e poco studiata che invece, come dimostra l'esistenza di corsi universitari di interpretariato di trattativa, sta acquisendo una sempre maggior rilevanza e, come dimostra il presente progetto, necessita di una formazione scolastica specifica per poter formare degli interpreti di trattativa professionisti.